Y Lemopoulos

Minutes of the

Meeting of the Executive Committee

of the

World Council of Churches

18 - 22 March 1993

meeting held at the
Ecumenical Institute Bossey, Switzerland

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WORLD COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, Switzerland
18 - 22 March 1993

1. OPENING ACTIONS

A. Worship

Morning worship, which took place each morning in the chapel of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, was planned by a staff group under the leadership of Rev. S. Wesley Ariarajah and Rev. Terry MacArthur.

B. Call to Order and Welcome

The Moderator, Archbishop Aram Keshishian, called the meeting to order at 9a.m. on Thursday 18 March. In greeting members of the Committee, he expressed special joy as he welcomed Dr Konrad Raiser on the occasion of his first meeting as General Secretary. The Moderator said that the Officers had already established a good working relationship with him and were looking forward to a new period of creative reflection and committed action in the life of the World Council.

C. Roll Call and Seating of Substitute

The General Secretary called the roll of those present, noting apologies for absence from Bishop Anderson, Ms Danquah, Bishop Gomez and Ms Taufatofua. It was **agreed** that Ms Tungane Williams be seated as substitute for Ms Taufatofua.

D. Minutes of previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey, from 18-20 August 1992 were **approved** as circulated.

E. Adoption of Agenda

The General Secretary introduced the draft agenda, noting that programme matters would be discussed in plenary sessions; the Programme Sub-committee would meet only if this were considered necessary. The agenda was adopted as proposed.

2. ACTIVITIES REPORTS

A. Ms Mercy Amba Oduyoye reported on the **programmatic activities of the Programme Units** in the period since the last meeting of Central Committee in August 1992. As written reports had been circulated, she highlighted several issues which required particular attention.

The Units were continuing the process of integration, and the different streams were beginning to flow together. Council-wide concerns included biblical and theological reflection, and the issue of Gospel and Culture. The mandated Working Groups on Women and on Education had held their first meetings, while the Youth Working Group had not yet met due to the demands of preparations for the EGGYS. Both cross-Unit and intra-Unit programmes were evolving more clearly. For example, Unit I was broadening the emphasis on work with the laity towards an inclusive community, while Unit II has participated in Round Tables in collaboration with Unit IV. Units I and III have recently jointly sponsored a consultation on Koinonia and Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

The Units were also beginning to articulate their theological foundations: Unit I was concentrating on aspects of koinonia in view of the forthcoming Faith and Order World Conference, while Unit II was developing the work on Gospel and Culture. Unit III has been seeking to express its basis in terms of a theology of life, and Unit IV has been doing biblical and theological reflection on diakonia.

The Staff Consultative Group (SCG) was evolving into a forum for planning, review and integration of programmes. It provides staff with an opportunity to hear about programmes being carried out in other Units, thereby developing an orientation to the future and leading to the identification of new programme areas and possible partners.

B. Prof. Sabev highlighted aspects of the work of the **Offices of Church and Ecumenical Relations (OCER), and of Inter-Religious Relations (OIRR).** In co-operation with the Units and with the Conference of European Churches (CEC), OCER has been involved in the process of reconciliation in conflict situations, and has facilitated visits of delegations to the Council as well as staff participation in ecumenical events.

OIRR has been involved in a number of meetings relating to Christian/Jewish and Christian/Muslim relationships, while new contacts have been made in order to monitor specific situations in Bosnia, Nigeria, Pakistan and Sudan.

The **Office of Communication** has taken first steps to implement the communication strategy approved by Central Committee in August 1992. Special attention was given to articulating a response for use by member churches in view of the critical article against the WCC that appeared in the Readers' Digest earlier this year.

The **Office of Management and Finance** has been making a review of funds and accounting practices of the Council in order to implement the new income development strategy. This Office - which includes the Personnel Office, Library, Computer Information Services and Central Services - has likewise been involved in setting up the infrastructure required to serve the whole house.

3. REPORT OF THE GENERAL SECRETARY

Dr Raiser began by expressing thanks to all those who had sent messages of welcome and greeting as he began his new responsibilities as General Secretary; it was very important to him both in a human and in a spiritual sense to know that he is supported and upheld by prayers and fellowship with many friends around the world.

He had looked forward to this meeting with expectation, said Dr Raiser, as it would provide the opportunity to establish human as well as working contacts with members of the Executive Committee as the group of friends who would be sharing most directly in the overall leadership responsibility of the World Council of Churches over the next five years. He had appreciated the warm reception given to him by staff colleagues, and felt they were ready to enter into a new venture in the life of the Council, keen to apply their energies to constructive work after the long period of concentration on internal matters.

1) Dr Raiser then referred to the activities that had occupied his first weeks in office - meeting the staff in Units and Offices as well as talking with visitors from member churches and familiarising himself with the numerous tasks in which the General Secretary must necessarily be involved. Although he intended to spend the first months in Geneva, he had nevertheless begun visiting member churches - one of the most important means of building relationships.

Three specific tasks have required particular attention:

a) Political concerns, especially the situation in the former Yugoslavia. A number of visits had taken place - an ecumenical team visit to Croatia; a visit by

women staff to Zagreb; a team visit together with the CEC to the Serbian Orthodox Church - and efforts were continually being made to discover the Council's responsibility in rendering an authentic Christian witness in this and in many other human tragedies.

b) The widespread crisis on the continent of Africa - Sudan, Ethiopia, Angola, South Africa, Togo - to mention only a few of the problem areas. It was now time for the Council to develop a comprehensive approach to respond to the crisis, going beyond what can be done with present staff resources.

c) With regard to criticisms of the WCC, member churches had been provided with information to help them respond to critical articles in the media such as the one appearing in the Readers' Digest. However, questions have been raised which require some more determined research to try and re-appropriate the experiences of the past 45 years.

2) In the second part of his report, the General Secretary identified some of the crucial issues in the wider sphere of the world-wide ecumenical movement which determine the Council's work.

- In spite of the ending of the cold war and the consequent disappearance of the former East/West ideological, political and military power confrontation, there is still no clarity about world security - in fact we seem to have entered a period of even greater insecurity. To some extent the tensions have been covered up, but now the inner antagonisms are surfacing, and there is a danger of a powerful cynicism taking the upper hand in the midst of a moral void, this uncertainty about social and political directions. We see no sign of a new world order - rather there is greater fragmentation than before, with strong ethnic, religious and nationalistic trends emerging.

- In many parts of the world there is an erosion of the moral and spiritual bases that held societies together, and we recognise that there is a need to rebuild the basic fabric of our human community. Earlier attempts to work for social transformation through conscious confrontation must give way to a process of reconstruction which has become the priority at this point of fragmentation and disintegration. New emphasis is needed on basic Christian criteria for a social and political order - issues of economic and political justice, elementary rights and human dignity, the question of good government and the norms and values that should be enshrined in institutions - these will occupy more attention than they have done in the past.

- This gives a clear base for the WCC and the ecumenical movement - bodies which are needed more today than ever before. But the reality is different: most people in our churches seem to share this situation of uncertainty which makes them cling to religion, to the communities they know, for the sake of security and to preserve their identity, rather than looking at religious communities as agents for change. So the churches are being drawn into defensive conflicts matching one identity against another; religion is being drawn into the political antagonisms that are developing, and most of our churches find it difficult to extricate themselves and to preserve an integrity of Christian witness which is not connected to one or the other political interest.

- There are mounting conservative tendencies in many of our member churches, and unity does not seem to be a priority for them. The invitation to communion with those who are *different* meets with more and more resistance among our communities. The churches seem preoccupied with preserving their own tradition, and efforts to move towards unity meet with resistance. It is evident that where there is a renewed call to evangelise, churches are getting into conflict with one another, and we have to find ways of responding to the problem of proselytism.

- Despite difficulties arising in dialogue between cultures, or between cultures and religions, yet an encouraging new feature can be witnessed - at least in the churches of the Reformation, where there is a growing tendency to full mutual recognition. This development will change the framework of our task in the WCC because we have to deal with three traditions of Christianity; our present means for dialogue are geared towards individual churches without recognising these comprehensive identities that are in many cases cultural rather than doctrinal. So we have to develop new ways of organising this inner dialogue of Christian cultures which has scarcely begun.

In view of the tendencies towards disintegration, we have a responsibility as the WCC to start again from what has been entrusted to us as a gift from God in Christ through the Holy Spirit. We have to find ways of making visible the mutual accountability of churches in mission and witness. There is no point in bemoaning the fact that we are still divided by the scandal of separation: we have to celebrate what we already have in a more convincing way - this is the witness we owe to our people now.

3) In conclusion, Dr Raiser stated three priorities for his work on behalf of the WCC in the period up to January 1994:

a) To make the new structure work, adapting it where necessary. This implies a fully functioning Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations, helping the churches to develop a sense of mutual accountability. The churches cannot be the church in any one place apart from being in relationship with one another. At the same time the Units need to develop a clear sense of a common wholeness of their task. There must be a proper interplay between the directing role of the executive directors and the participatory process of a staff team.

b) To contribute to the clear profile of programmatic priorities. We need to distinguish between the programmatic focus of the Units and what are to be seen as ongoing services and advisory responsibilities. We should consider with care what the WCC should be known for in a given period of time. Some of our work no longer needs high visibility programmatically while other issues have been out of the public eye and should now receive greater visibility.

c) The process on Common Understanding and Vision of the WCC. This began as a by-product of restructuring but is probably an area of greater importance than originally thought. For example, the Council's 50th anniversary should not be so much a retrospective celebration but a prospective occasion where the churches reaffirm the communion they share with one another on the basis of a clear understanding of the nature and purpose of the WCC.

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The Moderator then reported on his visits to Iran and Ethiopia. These had increased his awareness that the WCC should not be a reality only in Geneva but also in the life of our member churches. Close relationships with the member churches are therefore of crucial importance for the life of the World Council of Churches.

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Referring to the **reporting process by the Executive Committee to the Central Committee**, the adequacy of which was questioned at its last meeting (in August 1992), the Moderator said that the Officers had discussed the matter and proposed the following procedures:

- the General Secretary would give a report to the Executive Committee, and the Moderator would add points if he so wished;

- the Moderator's Report to Central Committee would continue to be theme-oriented, but would also include some of the major aspects of the work of the Executive;
- the General Secretary's Report to Central Committee would be mainly about the programmes and activities of the Council;
- the Minutes of the Executive Committee are sent to members of Central Committee.

4. DISCUSSION OF REPORTS

A full discussion followed these presentations, relating to the various points made by the General Secretary and by the Moderator, as well as questions arising from the activities reports.

Dr Tolen felt that one of today's problems is that on one hand there is the ethnocentrism explosion, with a fear of fragmentation; and on the other, the question of what the place of religion is - to what extent would a common understanding on a religious basis have a bearing on political and social realities? In many places the real issue is not a religious one - the reality is political, economic or social. We come together, we think about religious issues, but on returning to our home environments we are inclined to lose sight of the religious aspect. Is it not time to make a step forward - to try to bring together not only the religious aspect but the social and economic aspects? But how do we in fact do this? How can we make peace with justice? These are the questions facing us today.

Prof. Aagaard warned against taking too simplistic an attitude. We must understand that Islam, like Christianity, has many different traditions, and we must not underestimate what is happening in the Muslim world in terms of the struggle to come to terms with the modern world.

His Beatitude Parthenios spoke about Islam from an Orthodox viewpoint and as someone living in the Middle East and thus in close contact with Islam. He considered it as a mistake on the part of Christians that more effort has not been made to understand Muslims - but Muslims do not understand us well either. We have made some attempts at dialogue, but their approach often creates fear among Christians. In their efforts to convert the whole world, they speak to us in religious terms, while we approach them in a political way rather than as Christians. He urged the WCC to face up to these questions and help Christians understand that they have to encounter Islam.

Also on the subject of Islam, Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that relations between Muslims and Orthodox in Russia are better than they have ever been, because Muslims do not proselytise and the Orthodox do not feel threatened as they do with the many western evangelical groups who are trying to convert Orthodox to Catholicism or Protestantism.

Dr Ariarajah noted that the significance for the churches in view of the rise of Islam has been a subject of study by the former sub-unit on Dialogue with People other Faiths. The plurality of Islam within itself makes it difficult to talk about "Islam" in a generalised way. Meetings have taken place with Muslims from areas of conflict, and efforts have been made to look at concrete steps to be taken on issues of peace and justice. This is a beginning, but it cannot solve the problem because there are fundamentalists who do not wish to talk. And many different kinds of political and social action are advocated in the name of religion. There is a big task to be done but the resources are lacking.

The Moderator emphasised the urgency of the issue of Islam for the WCC and also for the MECC. At one time Islam was to be found in specific areas of the world, while today it has become a world-wide reality. At the same time, it is important to be specific and contextual in our relations with Islam and generalisation must be avoided. But we need more mutual knowledge and information about each other. We are experiencing the emergence of Islamic fundamentalism, which is a reaction against western secular traditions and values; it is not an attitude against Christians or against Christian churches. Tensions between Muslim fundamentalists and Christians are due either to political reasons related to specific areas, or reactions to the manifestations of western Christian values in the life of churches in Muslim societies. As the WCC we must broaden the scope of our dialogue with Islam; but this should not be a theological dialogue because Islam is a cultural and political issue. It is a burning question for all our churches.

In connection with the analysis of the world situation made by the General Secretary, Metropolitan Kirill asked whether he considered the ecumenical movement to be in crisis. For his part, coming from the difficult situation in Russia, he affirmed that the ecumenical movement is indeed in deep crisis. He agreed that the belonging of people to religious communities contributes to the growth of national self-consciousness, and that people belong to these communities in order to stress their ethnic identities. But now this striving for ethnic identity is so powerful that it is becoming dangerous: people have become hostile towards each other in order to preserve their own ethnic identity. The churches have grown confused, because

the greater this striving towards ethnic identity becomes, the weaker is their wish to maintain ecumenical relationships.

This means that the ecumenical structures built up in the former Soviet Union have now been destroyed, and the efforts of the past 45 years might never have taken place. Metropolitan Kirill explained that the fact that he was here in a WCC meeting no longer meant anything to the Russian Orthodox Church; in fact, the majority of Orthodox are negative about maintaining any ecumenical relationship. He went on to describe the negative attitudes that are increasing among the Orthodox due to the influx of fundamentalist preachers, mainly from the USA, but also some from WCC member churches. The people do not understand why churches with whom they had relationships through the ecumenical movement were now treating them as a mission field.

In his view, the question to be raised now in the WCC is: What does our fellowship mean? - not in theological categories but in practical ones. What does it mean to be together within the ecumenical movement and within the WCC today?

On the subject of criticisms of the Council, Prof. Aagaard said that a meeting of Scandinavians involved in the WCC had decided to send a letter to the General Secretary urging him to establish a thorough investigation of the WCC's history in relation to churches of Eastern and Central Europe during the communist era. Now that state archives are open, an independent study should be done so that we can get some clarity on what happened in those years.

Secondly, Prof. Aagaard referred to the recent meeting of NCCs that took place in Hong Kong, and the fact that they had set up a continuation committee. Having already discussed guidelines for our relations with REOs (see Minutes of Central Committee 1992, p.49ff,72, Appendix V), she urged that care be taken that no new body is set up without the Council being fully aware of what was going on. The General Secretary referred to the increasing participation of local Roman Catholics in NCCs and the fact that this is beginning to affect the way the NCCs understand their relationship with the WCC. He assured the Executive that this issue would remain high on our agenda.

With regard to the need for adequate reporting to Central Committee about the work of the Executive Committee, Dr Kaessmann urged that some more reflection be done on how the Executive can be accountable to those who elected it. Was it really enough to have written reports, and for these to be supplemented by the Moderator in his report, especially when there was a period of 18 months between

meetings? The Moderator responded that he would try to include the wholeness of the work of the Executive Committee in his report to Central Committee.

Bishop Zacharias spoke of the "unholy alliance" of religion and nationalism/ ethnicity, especially in view of recent events in India, and asked what was the role of the WCC in this context?

Responding, Dr Raiser said that in the 1950s and 1960s, there was a feeling that a secular understanding of society was the only viable response to this kind of danger. But many who had advocated this secular understanding are beginning to have second thoughts. He himself was coming to the conviction that a new process of reflection was required on the place of religion in the life of communities. As a consequence of our struggle against secularism we have shunned the question of religion and Christian faith, and see "religion" in chaotic forms re-emerging as one of the most powerful dynamics in the community. And we do not know how to react. It is not a religionless society, but one that is entrenched in a kind of "religion" that is used for non-religious purposes. This is an area that needs to be explored more thoroughly - it goes beyond the question of the place of religion. The theological understanding of other faiths is only one facet of a much larger question.

In responding to some of the points made in the discussion, and in view of the importance of the issues raised, Dr Raiser suggested that the Programme Sub-committee should meet in order to take them up in more detail.

Dr Raiser was encouraged by Metropolitan Kirill's suggestion that the study on a Common Understanding of the WCC might include a step beyond the theological doctrinal approach to this question (cf. the Toronto Declaration), approaching it from the practical side of living mutual accountability. In pursuing this, it might help to overcome the difficulty in mutual understanding that has so far blocked our moving ahead. Secondly, a reassessment of the Orthodox evaluation of the WCC and their particular contribution to the life of the Council has been identified as one of our priority tasks.

With regard to the "laity", our understanding of what is meant has fundamentally changed. In the 1950s and 1960s the term referred to those who were professionals in the secular sphere; nowadays, lay people see themselves as the active presence of everyday experience of life within a church that has become more and more secluded. This issue should become an important input into the ecclesiological reflections of Faith and Order.

5. FIFTH WORLD CONFERENCE ON FAITH AND ORDER

Santiago de Compostela, Spain, 3-14 August 1993

A. Introduction to the Conference and the working Document

The Executive Committee at its meeting in August 1992 had requested opportunity for a discussion on the theological issues relating to the Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order, to take place at Santiago de Compostela in August 1993. In order to introduce this discussion, **Dr Mary Tanner**, Moderator of the Faith and Order Commission, was invited to make a presentation, summarised below, on the preparatory process for the Conference with its theme *Towards Koinonia in Faith, Life and Witness*.

The call for a Fifth World Conference on Faith and Order came in 1982, and in the years that followed, the most pressing question with which to engage the churches emerged as: "where are we, and where are we going in the search for unity?". The more the question was asked, the more a tentative answer began to appear: "*Towards Koinonia in faith, life and witness*", and in 1990 this was formulated as the theme of the World Conference. Faith and Order was already engaged in producing a text on unity for the 1991 Canberra Assembly, and this was adopted by the Assembly as the Canberra statement: "*The Unity of the Church as Koinonia: Gift and Calling*".

In planning the World Conference, Dr Tanner said that the intention has been to invite the churches and others into a conversation around the theme. This conversation began in Canberra, has continued to be part of the process, and will reach a significant moment in Santiago - but it will continue beyond Santiago as well.

In order to focus the conversation, Faith and Order prepared "an instrument of conversation" - the preparatory working document for the World Conference. The document has indeed stimulated a conversation and a large number of responses have been received from individuals and groups in many parts of the world. Other WCC Units have also contributed responses. The most encouraging conversation has been that between JPIC and Faith and Order in a recent consultation in Denmark, the report of which, entitled *Costly Unity* is an example of how much we have to gain from one another's insights. The challenge to envision unity in terms of "moral community" and being bonded together as conciliar communion offer promise for joint future work.

Another significant part of the conversation has taken place in eight regional consultations, each of which in its own way has provided contextual specificity to the themes of the World Conference; the results will provide input for the Conference itself. From these consultations, we have learned important lessons for the future working style of Faith and Order.

How has the conversation on the way begun to affect the theme for Santiago de Compostela? It has revealed that movement is indeed taking place - a movement of separated Christians and Christian communities *towards* one another in Christ. Each region differs and each has stories of reconciliation of memories of past bitterness, and of learning to be together in prayer and in joint action and witness. The various examples that can be quoted suggest that the way back is blocked - we have to move forward.

But we must be honest; there are bitter disappointments, new obstacles on the way, and a hardening of attitudes. In the consultations there was some disillusion that churches seemed not to take seriously the Lund principle, and show little commitment about putting into practice the convergences of *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. Many gaps were revealed which some feel cannot be bridged. The euphoria of the eighties and the feeling that unity at least between some partners was relatively close has disappeared.

The conversation so far shows a nervousness in talking about visibile unity. For some this points to uniformity, thus stifling diversity, and a fear of losing one's own particular tradition with its characteristic insights and ethos.

The concept of *koinonia*, however, does seem to have touched the hearts of many precisely because it resonates with experience. But here again questions are raised for some - does it emphasise the abstract too much, thus diminishing the experiential? Is *koinonia* one image of unity among others, or is it different, pointing to the fundamental reality of the life and love of God in which we already share and by which we are already joined to one another? Profound ecclesiological questions are being raised in the conversation that require further investigation and study.

The insights offered by Faith and Order on a communion in faith are based on the work *Confessing the One Faith*, and have given rise to challenging questions about for example the relation of faith confessed in word and carried in life, and the place of diversity in confession.

Koinonia in life picks up the agenda of BEM but is much wider than that. The conversation shows the need to challenge the churches with regard to the convergences of BEM and putting to them the questions raised in the Canberra Statement. We must overcome the tendency of each church to retreat into separate identity when faced with a call to costly unity. How are we to mark the communion that already exists even when we are unable to grow together in sacramental hospitality and in a degree of sharing of ministry?

The conversation on witness focuses on the work on church and world and the renewal studies. It is impossible to think of the unity of the church without the unity of the human community and the shalom of the whole of God's creation. This in turn leads back to the lack of credibility of the church as sign as long as it is diminished by the sinfulness of its members and structures as well as by the scandal of division which make for competition, rivalry and proselytism.

In conclusion, Dr Tanner expressed her hopes for the conversation as it develops in Santiago: that it will lead to a commitment to affirm the degree of communion that already exists; to a re-commitment to the search to make visible the communion that is God's gift; and that new areas of conversation for the future will be formulated. To focus on koinonia is to focus on the quality and character of God's own life in which we live and move and have our being. This leads to two more questions: what is the place of diversity within visible communion? and, how, if our fundamental communion given in Christ is to be maintained in rich diversity, and since tension will always be a mark of the life of Christians, are we to be held in conciliar communion, in graced belonging? What will be the structures of mutual accountability and how shall we cherish the faith in a dynamic way, witness together, and together serve the world and creation?

Dr Gassmann went on to speak of the practical arrangements for Santiago, noting that the working document would be revised to take into account the responses and comments received. Considerable emphasis would be placed on worship and bible study. He hoped it would be possible to find ways of interaction of our concern for the unity of the church with the concern for reconciliation wherever there are ethnic conflicts.

In **discussion** on the working document, His Beatitude Parthenios expressed appreciation for the reference to "mysterium"; Dr Tolen on the other hand was grateful that the document helped to make the theme less "mysterium" and more understandable. With regard to any future meetings, Dr Tolen urged that careful

evaluation be done after the World Conference. How were delegates expected to communicate what they have experienced?

Bishop Boseto raised a number of practical questions: how can koinonia be implemented? who brings it - theologians? If theologians are challenging the churches, who are the churches? - the leaders or the people? Koinonia is being lived out by the people, we cannot bring it to them from outside. He urged that there be more consultations at regional level, and especially in the Pacific area.

Metropolitan Kirill believed that people in the churches have great expectations of this World Conference, and feared that if these hopes were not justified, much damage would be done to the ecumenical movement. There is a certain disappointment that the search for unity has not yet resulted in unity, and for many people this Conference is seen as a last chance. He expressed hope that the Conference would give new inspiration and new perspectives, bringing the goal closer. However, if the only result of the Conference is a document - even if it is a good document - it would soon be forgotten and would not bring us closer to the unity of the church but would be seen as a defeat. It should become a turning point in the ecumenical movement as a whole by helping the churches to renew their vision and make a real step towards unity.

As a practical suggestion, the Metropolitan urged that a special Orthodox Consultation be arranged prior to the World Conference, because a preparatory event of this nature would be particularly helpful for the Orthodox.

Dr Kaessmann stressed the importance of the regional approach; the evaluation of the World Convocation on JPIC in Seoul also mentioned the need to pay attention to regional interpretations of world situations.

Archbishop Keshishian raised some questions about the extent of Roman Catholic participation in the preparations and in the World Conference itself. What was their reaction to the theme? Secondly, he wondered what form the final document would take - a statement, a message addressed to the churches? And how would some connection be established between the Conference and the future agenda of Faith and Order?

Dr Tanner affirmed that Roman Catholic members of the Faith and Order Commission have been fully involved both in the preparatory process and in the regional consultations. There will be 26 official RCC delegates at the Conference itself, and several of them will have a role in the programme.

Further responding to Archbishop Keshishian, Dr Tanner said it was hoped that two things would emerge from the Conference: a report of the perspectives that will come to the churches and form the future agenda of Faith and Order, and a statement or letter to the churches facing them with sharp challenges, urging them not to fall back but to move forward.

B. Discussion of the Report *Costly Unity*

As one of the participants in the February 1993 consultation in Ronde, Denmark (mentioned above), Prof. Aagaard introduced the Report entitled *Costly Unity*[1]. This had been jointly sponsored by Unit I - Faith and Order, and Unit III - Justice, Peace and Creation. Its intention was to revitalise a common conversation on the relation between unity and the conciliar process of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC), of which this report was a beginning. Past efforts to link issues of unity and social justice, ecclesiology and ethics, have either failed or met with unsurmountable obstacles.

Professor Aagaard summarised the Report and commented briefly on each of its sections, and on the suggestions contained in the appendices. There was an awareness of the importance of the link between ecclesiology and ethics, and an attempt to try to carry the conversation forward. It is not enough to affirm that JPIC and other moral issues are related to the church; rather, the being of the church is at stake. The consultation spoke about the church as a moral community, aware of the holiness of life; it is not simply a set of rules but a living community; koinonia is there within the local church, between local churches and in terms of sharing and material aid; koinonia between the churches and the world in terms of God's covenant; koinonia and conciliar fellowship; ecumenical accountability and the structures necessary to realise this. (See text of the Report).

In the ensuing discussion, His Holiness Pope Shenouda asked What is Unity? We have been searching for 45 years. "One Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph.4:5) shows that if we reach this one faith we can be one; otherwise we will only be in cooperation among friends, and not in Christian unity. True unity would mean taking Holy Communion together. Regarding BEM, many churches sent responses which were published, but no practical way to unity came out of this process. He suggested that a series of consultations be organised to study the different points of view on each subject to be found in the responses to BEM. Churches cannot be

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[1] Copies available from WCC, Unit III.

in unity unless they are one in dogma and theology. He felt that the Orthodox were beginning to draw nearer to others through theological dialogues. If practical ways were found to study the points of diversity and to discuss beliefs in order to be one in faith, this would be a step nearer to being united as churches.

Fr Kishkovsky noted that the work of the various streams in the ecumenical movement has tended to be done separately from one another, so he saw this Ronde consultation as an important sign for future directions for the Council's work. He reiterated the need for the work of the ecumenical movement to move forward and to permit for example Faith and Order and the JPIC stream to be in constant exchange of views, perspectives and insights.

Dr Raiser agreed that this consultation had indeed been an encouraging step forward. Although there have been previous attempts to link ecclesiology and ethics in a more conscious way, they have failed: Faith and Order does have another side to its history which is not always remembered. This relationship could be a fruitful one of mutual challenging and enrichment, and perhaps the World Conference would respond in this spirit.

He raised a question about terminology: the "moral" dimension of social life; koinonia as a "moral" reality: this use of the word "moral" is not explained and so it poses a problem. Increasingly the disintegration of this moral reality is one of the most painful experiences that people are going through today. The report should invite us to reflect in depth about what that reality is, what sustains it, and what the dangers are that threaten the sustainability of this moral dimension of social thinking. How do we communicate between different moral realities, which vary according to different cultural traditions? Dr Raiser drew attention to an important source for this debate, to be found in earlier Faith and Order studies.

Thirdly, Dr Raiser noted the reference in the report to the ten affirmations of the Seoul World Convocation on JPIC seen as an "ecumenical creed" or "catechism", and he hoped that this could be explored further in another consultation.

Bishop Zacharias, a participant at Ronde, saw the bringing together of koinonia and diakonia in relationship as something very meaningful for Faith and Order: JPIC can give a new dimension to Faith and Order's future work. This is the koinonia defined in the Trinity, but in Jesus Christ koinonia leads to diakonia: moving towards a koinonia is something to be looked into further. But different koinonias are developing all over the world - as diverse expressions of different cultural contexts. Koinonia for what? To renew faith, to reaffirm life, and for a

relevant witness. Costly unity is important when we speak of koinonia at local and global levels. He hoped that the World Conference would give impetus to follow koinonia and will reach to other areas of work and other sections of people. The theme brings the idea of movement from the unity we have to the unity we seek; faith should be challenging, and be challenged by the ethical and social areas of life. Faith and Order must lead the churches towards more koinonia, to a wider and deeper koinonia in every sense.

Archbishop Keshishian welcomed the working document as a bold attempt to see the things we have been discussing in the ecumenical movement in different perspectives. But he warned that the term *koinonia* had become rather widespread, and its use might create an ambiguous ecumenical situation. The term has not only theological but also social, political and cultural connotations. It is not possible to reach a common definition of it in the ecumenical context, but an attempt should be made to clarify the meaning in the context in which we are using it. Secondly, we should not take for granted a linkage between ecclesiology and ethics; it is a sensitive and unexplored area. As we move forward we need to take this seriously.

At a later session, Rev.Nélida Ritchie presented the following comment from the Programme Sub-committee with regard to the Faith and Order World Conference:

- In the final revision of the working document for the World Conference, consideration should be given to including input from recent consultations. Special mention was made of the consultation on JPIC/Koinonia (February 1993).
- There is also the question about the implication for unity of Jewish/Christian dialogue.

The Executive Committee **took note of** these comments.

6. COMMON UNDERSTANDING AND VISION OF THE WCC

Ms Oduyoye introduced a progress report, reminding the Executive of actions taken so far and proposing next steps.

The need for a longer-term evaluation of the vision and nature of the Council was first raised in the course of the discussion on re-structuring during Central Committee in Moscow in 1989. Alongside the decision to proceed with the re-structuring of WCC programmes (adopted by Central Committee in September

1991), it was also decided to begin a more extensive process of clarifying a **Common Understanding and Vision** of the WCC. This process is a major effort involving the member churches as well as other ecumenical partners and organisations, with the aim of presenting a comprehensive statement for adoption by Central Committee at its meeting in 1995.

In order to begin the process, the General Secretary (Dr Castro) convened a group of persons who had some connection with the ecumenical movement to discuss the subject in some detail; the report is to be found in *The Ecumenical Review* of January 1991. Subsequently each of the sub-sections at the Canberra Assembly was asked to discuss the issue and report to the General Secretary.

Additional contributions to the process, including presentations on Orthodox, Evangelical and Youth perspectives, were brought into a plenary discussion during CC in September 1991. And in May 1992, discussions in the Unit Commissions yielded valuable material for further reflection.

The Executive Committee at its meeting in August 1992 also discussed the subject and added the following concerns:

- How to reach churches through national and regional councils;
- How do churches gain understanding about their participation in the WCC;
- Why do so many new churches want to become members of the WCC? What is their understanding of and motive for membership?

In September 1992 a group of women ecumenists put together their thoughts on the Vision and Common Understanding of the WCC, the full report of which can be found in the Risk book *She flies beyond* by Dr Pauline Webb.

In order to facilitate discussion among member churches and partners a study guide is being prepared. The questions raised in the guide are to be taken up in a series of Hearings to take place at local level wherever these can be arranged. Issues raised as a possible starting point for discussion include the following:

- The understanding of unity as central to the vocation of the WCC;
- The identity and profile of the WCC: how can the churches own the Council? How can the WCC inspire the ecumenical commitment of churches?
- How does the WCC relate to and understand constituencies beyond the official representation of its member churches?
- New patterns of cooperation among ecumenical partners;

- What does it mean to share life in this fellowship of churches?
- To what extent do our diverse ecclesiologies influence our fellowship in the WCC?

In the ensuing discussion, Metropolitan Daniel, referring to Metropolitan Kirill's remarks about the ecumenical movement being in a crisis, reminded the Executive that a crisis is also an opportunity for a new beginning, or a new direction. He underlined the need for a more systematic and continuing theological reflection, bringing together not only theologians (who were the authors of the Toronto Declaration in 1950) but also persons from the new generation. He wondered whether there should not be an Orthodox group for theological education, attached to Unit I, to prepare a document for discussion in Orthodox Churches. Without a self-critical reflection, it is not possible to make a valid contribution.

Dr Tsetsis also stressed the importance of taking Orthodox views and contributions seriously, and he felt that a more thorough examination should be made of the pan-Orthodox statement of 1986, and the Orthodox statements made before and after the Canberra Assembly.

The General Secretary, responding to some of the questions raised, noted that the original concept had changed and developed now into an issue that could well have some policy impact. Attempts had been made in earlier times to raise this, but at these points it was not acceptable because it was seen as too difficult to handle. Now there is a realisation that these questions can no longer be avoided, and there is a greater readiness to become engaged in this than had previously been the case.

Dr Raiser reminded the Executive that the WCC had been formed by the merger of two independent entities - Faith and Order, and Life and Work - with the later addition of the International Missionary Council and the World Council of Christian Education. It was only in 1975 that the aims and purposes of the Council as stated in the Constitution were formulated. In the meantime, conflicting claims have been made about the primary aim of the Council. At this stage, our task is to try to formulate the wholeness of the ecumenical vision, recognising its various dimensions and affirming that it cannot be divided. If we succeed in this challenge, it will go a long way to strengthening the ecumenical movement as a whole.

Sometimes the WCC is described as an instrument serving the member churches; at others it is seen as a privileged instrument of the ecumenical movement. But the Council does more than carry out the explicit desires of its member churches.

There is an ambiguity here which can appear contradictory, and this needs to be explored in greater depth to get beyond this contradiction.

In response to Dr Tsetsis, the General Secretary agreed that the WCC has not found ways of receiving and appropriating documents such as the Orthodox ones he referred to; yet we must face the fact that we come together in the WCC against the background of three very different, though inter-related, streams of Christian tradition and culture. It is naive to think that these could be merged, but what is the consequence of this for the Council? How can there be a Council that recognises these and transforms them into a source of mutual enrichment, rather than tries to maintain a western, liberal style. This is a challenge to be faced.

With regard to procedure, Dr Raiser proposed a possible timetable:

- that we work towards sharing a first round of our findings with Central Committee in 1995;
- that the Executive help to work towards a possible statement to be made by Central Committee in 1996 (cf. the letter to the churches by Central Committee in 1972 entitled *Committed to Fellowship*, which grew out of a Faith and Order discussion on conciliar fellowship);
- that such a letter/statement be carefully studied by the member churches in the following two years, so that it might be brought to the Assembly in 1998 for adoption, and which would go on to provide an orientation for the Council for the next two decades.

Metropolitan Kirill expressed concern on behalf of the Orthodox: what would any new common understanding of the nature of the WCC mean for the ecclesiology of the member churches? If it conflicts with the self-understanding of member churches, this would destroy the WCC. He urged that the process be handled carefully in order to ensure the future of our fellowship.

In conclusion, the Moderator urged that the Executive be kept well informed as this process develops in order to avoid any further uncertainties. He affirmed that there was no intention of producing a "new" Toronto Declaration, because that would be unacceptable for many of our churches. The ultimate aim of the process should not be simply to make an affirmative statement about what the Council is, but that it should also offer an opportunity to raise questions about the identity and self-understanding of the WCC and the ecumenical movement.

7. EIGHTH ASSEMBLY

The General Secretary introduced a paper summarising actions taken by the Executive and Central Committees so far with regard to the next assembly. The Central Committee has declared its desire to be in a position to decide about the site, dates, and theme for the Eighth Assembly, and to appoint the members of the Assembly Planning Committee (APC). He therefore asked the Executive Committee to help identify what the next steps should be in this process.

The General Secretary proposed that the following tasks be done by staff as follows:

1) **Possible sites:** Invitations had already been received from a number of countries, and it was proposed that Rev. William Perkins (who was Executive Secretary for the Seventh Assembly, now retired) be invited on a consultancy basis to follow up these invitations, to visit potential sites and to report to the Executive in September. It was noted that no WCC Assembly had so far taken place in Latin America, and the General Secretary was urged to give priority to considering possible sites on that continent.

2) **Allocation of seats, composition of delegations**: After each assembly this process has been carefully reviewed but none of the methods used so far has been entirely satisfactory. The General Secretary was proposing that Ms Rosemary Green be asked to compile the relevant details from the experience of previous assemblies and to bring a proposal to the Executive in September.

The Executive **agreed** to these proposals.

3) **Nature, content and shape of the assembly**: A number of different elements need to be kept in mind in looking at this, and it was here that the General Secretary was asking for guidance from the Executive Committee. He proposed that a small group of Executive members be appointed to meet once before September in order to study the issues thoroughly and look at the various options as to how to organise an assembly, taking the constitutional requirements into consideration.

The General Secretary added that once the APC is appointed, a point of reference on the Geneva staff would be required. He therefore envisaged setting up a nucleus assembly office, probably as from 1 April 1994.

Prof. Aagaard reported that representatives of the churches in Scandinavia were planning to meet to consider proposals for a better organisation of the assembly, and she urged members of the Executive to take every opportunity to discuss different methodologies with their own church representatives.

At a later closed session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Nominations Sub-committee. A small group of members of the Executive was appointed to meet to prepare recommendations for the September meeting (but with no decision-making power) as follows:

Rev. Nelida Ritchie (moderator)
Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia
Ms Beatrice Danquah
Dr Margot Kaessmann
Bishop Melvin Talbert
Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos

As this group did not fulfil all the required balances, assurance was given that care would be taken to achieve the correct balances when appointing members of the APC.

8. WCC/RCC RELATIONSHIPS

In view of the decision by Central Committee in August 1992 "that a special session of Central Committee in 1994 be devoted to relationships with the Roman Catholic Church at local, national, regional and universal levels", Dr Sabev had prepared a paper describing the present situation; this began with a general assessment of current relationships with RCC, particularly within the framework of the JWG, and went on to make a number of proposals for action by the Executive in preparation for Central Committee. Dr Sabev highlighted a number of points as a basis for discussion.

Metropolitan Kirill pointed out that there are two overlapping realities: relationships between the WCC and the RCC, and the RCC as an ecclesiological structure; there is also the question of relationships between WCC member churches and the RCC. As far as relationships between the Russian Orthodox Church and the RCC were concerned, no progress had been made following some modest agreements reached at a meeting in Geneva in March 1992. The RCC had proceeded with the appointment of a papal nuncio; a number of RCC monastic

orders have settled in Russia, and new parishes have been established, with no discussion or reference to bishops and clergy of the Russian Orthodox Church. This was a cause of much pain for the ROC and the Metropolitan therefore felt that the WCC should be aware of these problems.

With regard to a proposal in Dr Sabev's paper, Metropolitan Kirill expressed the view that it would not be appropriate for the WCC Officers to visit Rome: this would give the wrong impression about our relationship. On the other hand, a meeting between the General Secretary and the Pope and with staff of PCPCU could be helpful at the right moment.

Metropolitan Daniel agreed, noting that the situation is similar in many former Eastern European countries. He wondered whether a group of theologians from the Faith and Order Standing Commission might have an encounter with members of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith in Rome. The PCPCU is not the WCC's only partner.

Dr Tolen noted that the situation at local level is often very different from that between Geneva and the Vatican, and he suggested that contributions from member churches should be included in the Central Committee discussion. In Cameroon, if a priest or bishop is seen to be building good relationships between Catholics and Protestants, he is usually sent elsewhere; Protestants are often not accepted as members of the Christian Church.

Dr Tsetsis reminded the Executive of the need to remember that the WCC is a council of churches while the RCC is a universal Church: we should not therefore expect to have the same kinds of relationships. There is a distinction between being invited to meetings and sitting on committees; it is not usual for a WCC staff person to sit on committees of its member churches, so there is even less reason to be thus involved in RCC internal matters.

Although local relationships in the UK are good, and the RCC participates fully in the Council of Churches for Britain and Ireland (CCBI), Mr Briggs said that this does create a problem because people expect the WCC to have the same kind of relationship. An ongoing educational task is required to help people understand why the RCC is willing to cooperate locally and nationally, whereas on world level the situation is different.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda spoke of his meeting with Pope Paul VI in 1973 when they had signed a common declaration condemning proselytism, yet this has not

been adhered to and proselytism continues to be widespread. The RCC sees Orthodox and Protestant Christians as separated churches.

His Beatitude Parthenios stressed the importance of continuing the dialogue. In the early days as the WCC began its relationship with the RCC, there was a general belief that the RCC would join the WCC, and only later was it realised that this would not be the case. Nevertheless the dialogue continued. However, some members of the Body (e.g. Orthodox Churches in some countries) are undergoing particular suffering and have asked us for help: it is our duty to respond. Therefore the way in which we continue dialogue with the RCC must take account of the fact that some of our members are suffering.

Bishop Okullu spoke of the painful experience of being a member of the Joint Working Group between the WCC and the RCC (in the period 1975-1983). Whenever a step forward had been agreed upon, the point would come when they found themselves back at the beginning with the RCC simply re-stating its position on an issue. The Bishop felt they have difficulty taking the WCC seriously and will not do so as long as there is no breakthrough on these same questions that we face each time we meet. Of course we must continue the struggle but we have to accept that it is a painful one.

Bishop Boseto felt that too little attention is given to what is happening at grassroots level; it is difficult to communicate between the local and the world level - each sees the other as so far apart as to be almost irrelevant. Would it be possible for JWG members at regional level hold consultations to help people at local level to understand the problems?

The General Secretary stressed the need to develop a sense of realism, and an awareness of the integrity of the WCC's agenda. The RCC has reminded the WCC repeatedly that we are different kinds of entity and we have not taken them seriously. We have to begin from the recognition that because the RCC is one world-wide church and the WCC is a fellowship of nationally organised churches, we do operate at different levels. So we must be realistic and recognise the RCC's limitations with regard to cooperation.

Many efforts have been made, and studies undertaken by the JWG, in an attempt to extend the network to include partners within the RCC other than the Vatican, but we have to conclude that for the time being the way is blocked.

In the Reference Committee at the Canberra Assembly, the possibility of scaling down the institutional relationships with the Vatican was considered with the intention of putting an end to attempts made over the years to knock on doors we know will remain closed to us. It has simply not been possible for the WCC to have a real discussion with the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, or with the Secretary of State. Dr Raiser also pointed out that cooperation on the level of the JWG does not exhaust nor call into question our relationship with the RCC in general; the JWG was originally seen as an interim measure until the RCC could join the WCC, but it is clear that this will not happen unless the WCC is prepared to change its identity.

With regard to the proposed visit to Rome, the Officers had felt it might be useful to meet with some senior representatives of PCPCU in view of the number of sensitive problems being faced and the potential misunderstandings that need to be clarified. Any decision about this would be made on the basis of advice by the Executive Committee.

Dr Tsetsis proposed that, instead of the Officers going to Rome, the WCC should invite Cardinal Cassidy to come and discuss these issues in Geneva.

In conclusion, the Moderator said that a distinction must be maintained between difficulties being experienced at local level and those at global level, while acknowledging their inter-relatedness. He saw two possible ways of handling this: either by taking a passive approach, or an active approach, taking the initiative ourselves rather than reacting to what the RCC is doing.

The report was referred to the Programme Sub-committee for further consideration and proposals for appropriate action.

At a later session, Ms Ritchie presented the report of the Programme Sub-committee, which had studied the original paper in detail and proposed a number of amendments which are incorporated in the text below. The Sub-committee proposed that the Executive Committee endorse the following points:

> Besides the delay in taking up the Canberra recommendations on some aspects of the mandate of the Joint Working Group, the following challenges and problems have been encountered:
>
> a) Differences of interpretation regarding the understanding of the church and the unity of the church in terms of koinonia;

b) Issues of re-evangelisation/evangelisation and proselytism;
c) Deterioration of relations between Orthodox Churches and the RCC on the issue of uniatism;
d) Hesitancy on the part of particular Roman Catholic partners regarding the implementation of JWG recommendations and follow up on important areas of work (e.g. social thought and action, mixed Christian marriages);
e) Slow-down of some bilateral dialogues and other joint activities at the local/national/regional levels. There are similar trends also in some NCCs and REOs with Roman Catholic membership.

While the WCC should re-state its commitment to close cooperation with Roman Catholic partners and its readiness to strive for a deepening of relationships with the RCC, it is also necessary to affirm the integrity of the Council in the spirit that many member churches call for.

In view of the present stage of WCC/RCC relationships, the following actions by the Executive Committee were **recommended** in order to give further impetus to the WCC/RCC relationships:

a) that the recommendations of the Canberra Assembly be taken seriously and implemented according to the suggestions of Central Committee at its meeting in Geneva in 1992 (see Minutes, p. 69);
b) that the Assembly statement on the unity of the Church as koinonia be followed up together with Roman Catholic members of the Faith & Order Commission in preparation for the forthcoming World Conference in August 1993;
c) that the WCC state clearly its solidarity with Orthodox member churches in implementing decisions by Central Committee in 1992 concerning uniatism and facing the challenge of proselytism. (In this context the tasks and ecumenical implication of the newly established "Permanent Inter-dicasterial Commission for the Church in Eastern Europe" should be analysed);
d) that the WCC affirm strongly the "oneness of the ecumenical movement", mutual accountability and spirit of fellowship in relation to churches, councils, conferences of churches and Christian World Communions;
e) that a careful evaluation be made of the Third International Consultation of NCCs and its findings regarding the nature, identity, role and cooperation of councils within the one ecumenical movement;
f) that the tasks described above be given due attention in the agenda of the JWG for the period leading up to the next meeting of Central Committee.

(The process of "assessing afresh the basis and common ground for WCC/RCC relationships" will require reference to JWG publications, a common approach to other themes as reflected in Minutes of the JWG, and joint work within Faith & Order, e.g. BEM, the Apostolic Faith, and Unity as Koinonia).

Affirming the integrity of the WCC could also imply that we need to be prepared to state more clearly the differences of approach and position, while at the same time seeking convergence and consensus and improved cooperation within the ecumenical agenda and priorities of the Council. This might especially be the case in the intended collaboration in the area of social thought and action.

It was further suggested:

i) that the Officers follow WCC/RCC relationships more closely; this would include a meeting with the WCC members of the JWG;
ii) that the President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, Edward Cardinal Cassidy, and his senior staff, be invited to a working meeting with the General Secretary and the other Officers of the WCC prior to the Central Committee meeting in 1994.

The Sub-committee underlined the importance of the 1992 decision that the Central Committee evaluate relationships with the RCC at local, national, regional and international levels, and suggested that, for this assessment of the ecumenical situation and its implication for WCC/ RCC relations, help be sought from local churches, NCCs and REOs.

The Executive Committee **endorsed** these recommendations.

9. ECUMENICAL GLOBAL GATHERING OF YOUTH AND STUDENTS (EGGYS)

Mendes, near Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, 16-26 July 1993

Mr Peter Brock presented a report, illustrated by slides, describing recent activities leading up to the EGGYS. Local committees have been formed in many parts of the world, but it is clear that some areas are more involved in the EGGYS process than others. He reminded the Executive that there are six partners involved in the

EGGYS process; some 420 delegates are expected, of whom 81 have been named by the WCC.

The process is seen as the main focus, with the Gathering itself as one methodology among others within the process. The aim is to give opportunities for young people to come together ecumenically and to commit themselves to developing a vision for the future of ecumenical youth work and the ecumenical movement within their local context.

The Gathering itself will be preceded by programmes in local communities in Brazil, based on a number of different themes, and participants will have opportunity to share and reflect on their experiences in these communities. Reflection on how to communicate their experiences to those at home will feature in the latter part of the Gathering.

Mr Brock stressed the fact that the people who are planning and implementing EGGYS should be responsible for the follow-up, but must recognise that they are not the main actors in follow-up activities. For EGGYS is also about new ways of work, new patterns of relationships and new vision, so new and younger people must come forward to face the continuing challenges facing the ecumenical movement.

In response to a question from Ms Rantakari, Mr Brock said that Indigenous People will be included in each of the delegations. One of the exposure themes will be contacts with Indigenous People of Brazil. Together with PCR a meeting is planned beforehand to help prepare Indigenous People to participate fully in the Gathering.

Dr Tolen expressed concern that little impact on the churches was so far perceptible in African countries and he urged that stronger efforts be made to establish youth organisations in the churches at local level. On the other hand, Ms Mendis said that in Asia more and more local groups are taking initiatives in planning local events and there is enthusiasm at the idea of getting together with young people from other parts of the world, to be involved in specific themes such as human rights issues, inter-religious dialogue, and so on.

Mr Brock commented that the EGGYS process was producing good response in some regions, but in others it was more difficult to penetrate to the level necessary, particularly where communications and networking are limited because of lack of travel possibilities.

The importance of the follow-up was stressed by Ms Gcabashe; was there a time frame to ensure that this is carried out practically. Mr Brock said there is commitment in terms of resources and to continuing meetings of the staff team. He agreed that space must be allowed during the Gathering itself to establish an agenda for the follow-up so that the delegates feel that it is their responsibility.

The Moderator expressed the view that there is some reluctance in our churches in terms of encouraging the participation of young people in the ecumenical movement. He felt that the major focus during the pre- and post-gathering phases was the process of ecumenical conversion and formation for the younger generation. We cannot speak about the future of the ecumenical movement without looking to young people. He perceived a weakness in the process in that not all WCC member churches could have opportunity to send delegates, since only 81 places were allotted to the World Council. Further, the Moderator asked whether any consideration was being given to those involved in groups and movements that are not necessarily linked to a church.

Mr Brock affirmed that the formation and conversion of young people were seen as the key to the national process. With regard to the weakness in the process referred to by the Moderator, he pointed to the limited funding and staff resources.

Secondly, there is a wide participation of groups outside existing EGGYS networks especially at national levels, and in some regions, especially Asia. At global level there are many questions to be looked at, not only in terms of participation but in relating to the whole network. What is certain is that young people are living out their faith and realising the kind of future they want, and EGGYS is a major contribution to this.

10. THE ECUMENICAL DECADE - CHURCHES IN SOLIDARITY WITH WOMEN

Ms Aruna Gnanadason gave a progress report, illustrated by slides, noting that the Executive, at its meeting in March 1992, had approved a mid-Decade process to address the churches, calling them to re-dedicate themselves to the goals of the Decade; this is seen as an attempt to "give the Decade back to the Churches". One of the proposals is to arrange ecumenical team visits to every member church during the coming two years, to engage in dialogue with them and to re-discover some of the energy and enthusiasm expressed when the Decade was launched in 1988.

The Working Group on Women, at its meeting in September 1992, dealt with practical matters with regard to the composition of the teams (75 in all), background materials that would be required and other concerns to be kept in mind. A booklet has been sent to the churches containing suggestions for a liturgy, prayers and other worship materials for use during the period between Easter and Pentecost 1993.

A plenary session on the Ecumenical Decade was presented by a WCC staff team to the World Consultation of NCCs in Hong Kong in February 1993, illustrating the kinds of issues which church women are raising in the various regions. It also served as an opportunity to prepare them to receive requests for help with practical arrangements connected with the ecumenical visits. In addition to visits to the churches and to NCCs, teams will be encouraged to visit women's groups and take part in ecumenical worship services and other gatherings.

Ms Gnanadason called on members of the Executive to support the staff team with their prayers and solidarity. It was anticipated that an interim report would be brought to Central Committee in 1994.

Another important issue on which churches have called for action was that of violence against women; a report on this would also be shared with Central Committee.

Dr Tolen and Ms Gcabashe expressed appreciation for the theme "Giving back the Decade to the Churches" - it was an important reminder that the Decade is not simply for women but for the churches to support women. It is the churches which must express solidarity and create communities of women and men.

Bishop Zacharias asked for more clarity about the purpose of the team visits. Was it just a matter of visiting church leaders and a few women? He stressed the importance of using these an opportunity to share what is going on in different regions, what other churches are doing in particular situations. We need to ask the churches if they have made new decisions which make a difference to women, with regard to decision-making processes. He suggested that each team should enter into the life of the church they are visiting, to share experiences and to learn what the church is doing. Church leaders must be made aware of what is going on both within and outside their churches.

Ms Rantakari was glad to note that men would be included in the visiting teams; she felt that there is some fatigue in a number of churches about the insistence on

women's issues, so the approaches to church leaders must vary as appropriate for the specific situation.

Ms Gcabashe suggested that the report of the team visit to Zagreb in the former Yugoslavia be shared as widely as possible to churches and women's groups, as well as information about the Ecumenical Women's Solidarity Fund which has been set up to aid women and children victims of the war in the former Jugoslavia and elsewhere (see also under Public Issues, p.40).

The Moderator said that he found some difficulty with the term "in solidarity" with women. In the Orthodox tradition, women and church are not two different entities - they belong to one reality which together consitute one entity. This is an important ecclesiological statement. The church includes - and should include - all categories of human society, and this is essential for our understanding of the church. Therefore we cannot speak of the church *and* women. However, we do need to remind the churches that women should be fully involved in the life of the church - in all spheres of church life and witness. Participation means a transformation of life styles, of methodologies, of structures.

Secondly, he was grateful for the use of the word *dialogue*, rather than talking *to* the churches. It means listening to each other, giving and receiving. We as WCC have something to give to the churches which is emerging from our common reflection in the Council, but at the same time we need to listen to what the churches have to tell us out of their particular context.

The General Secretary described in more detail what is implied by **team visits** - is a very demanding process. Such an effort to plan visits to all our member churches has only been done once - prior to the 1983 Vancouver Assembly - at a time when all other programme activity ceased. He was concerned that there be a clear realisation of what we are doing by using this means of visiting our churches, because another such process could not be envisaged prior to the Eighth Assembly, for example. We should therefore be conscious of the fact that, while this team visit process originates within the framework of the Decade, it must at the same time be seen as an effort to develop relationships with the churches in a broader sense. We are embarking on a process that is not only of importance for the Decade but for the Council as a whole.

Ms Santana affirmed the need to recognise that the church is concerned about both women and men. But in our societies, a majority of the women are not part of the church, and it is many of these who are the most oppressed within society. Surely

we are calling on the churches to be conscious of the reality of women in the whole of society, and to realise the power of the churches in the overall thinking that permeates society. When we speak of "solidarity with women", we are not thinking only of women within church structures but of women in society as a whole, with the church as one of the places where women participate.

The visiting teams should make every effort to include women's groups from both within and outside the particular church, and use the opportunity to bring them together with church leaders. Many women are involved in work in relation to women's rights and against violence against women, and it would be an enrichment for our churches if a closer harmony were established in local contexts through these team visits .

Ms Gnanadason affirmed that the teams would be seen as ambassadors of the Council as a whole, and not limited to Decade-related issues; perhaps they could also serve as a first stage in preparing the churches for the next assembly - which in fact will mark the end of the Decade. It is clear that a strategy for planning the visits must be drawn up, and that care be taken in arranging appropriate dates with the churches concerned.

11. OTHER PROGRAMME MATTERS

A. Appointment of persons from non-member churches to executive staff positions

At the Executive meeting in August 1993 (minutes p.27), a question was raised about the rationale for appointing persons from non-member churches to staff positions in grades 7-10. The Director of Personnel, Rev. Carlos Sintado, introduced a paper explaining the current understanding of the Council's policy on this subject.

The General Secretary affirmed that no grade 7-10 staff appointment of a Roman Catholic is made without endorsement from the RC side, although such endorsement is not sought for support-staff positions. With regard to members of Protestant non-member churches, no specific endorsement is sought but care is taken to ensure that an appointment is not detrimental to the church concerned. It is felt that appointing a staff member from a non-member church could help to establish a link with that church which may not otherwise exist. Each case is different, and no appointment is made without the knowledge and decision of the Executive Committee.

B. Report on the Ecumenical News Service (ENS)

The Director of the Office of Communication, Mr Jan Kok, presented a paper updating the situation with regard to the establishment of the ENS. He reminded members of the Executive that, although the governing bodies of the four partners (WCC, LWF, ARC and CEC) had initially approved the setting up of the ENS, it became clear in August 1992 that the expected grants would not materialise. The Executive Committee had recommended as an interim step that possibilities be explored for the reorganisation of the WCC's own news and information office to provide some of the services envisaged for the ENS, with a view to its evolving into a full ENS as originally foreseen in two to four years' time.

Following Central Committee in August 1992, a plan for such a first step towards an ENS was presented to the founding partners of ENS which included the following main points:

- EPS (Ecumenical Press Service) would be developed into a news service to the media in real and close partnership with LWF, CEC and WARC to start with. The name should be changed to Ecumenical News Service (ENS);
- Emphasis would be placed on the distribution of news by fax and electronic mail and possibly a weekly printed news report for the media, and a monthly printed news digest for church leaders and others interested (in English, French and German);
- A minimum of two experienced journalists would be needed to work full-time on responding to the needs of the media, and two administrative/editorial assistants;
- A small advisory board of people chosen on the basis of professional skills and expertise in news agencies would guide the work of ENS. On staff level a small steering group of representatives of the communication offices of the partners should be set up.

In response to a question by Dr Nababan, Mr Kok said that this was a slightly different plan from the one originally proposed and the grants have had to be renegotiated. These contributions had now been pledged, and will be received once ENS is launched.

The Moderator asked whether news items specifically or exclusively related to the partners would be included; if so, in what way and to what extent? He expressed concern lest ENS create a sense of competition between news relating to the different partners. Mr Kok responded that the ENS has been set up in order to

create a better understanding of the work of the four partners in the public media, and was not intended to deal directly with public relations.

C. Revision of Unit By-Laws

Mr Davies informed the Executive that the small committee appointed by Central Committee to work on a revision of Unit By-Laws in view of the new structure would meet in mid-April. A staff group had done some preparatory work and an initial report had been shared with the committee. There seemed to be two possible ways forward:

- minimal editing of existing by-laws to make them consistent with the new structure, **or**
- producing new by-laws for all the Units, taking into account the specific matters to be honoured due to past agreements. The Units have been asked to comment on these proposals before they go to the committee, which will report to the Executive in September.

The General Secretary explained that although the intention of appointing the committee was to deal with the first option, there was an additional problem because three of the former sub-unit commissions had their own by-laws, in addition to Unit by-laws. That was the reason for the slightly wider mandate.

D. Responsibilities of Unit Committees and Unit Commissions

Ms Oduyoye presented a revised text of a document that had been shared with Central Committee in 1992, on which further clarification had been requested. After some discussion, the Executive Committee **adopted** the two items related to the responsibilities of Unit Committees and Unit Commissions, as follows:

UNIT COMMITTEES are composed of approximately one-fifth of the members of Central Committee. Delegated observers, delegated representatives and advisers invited to Central Committee meetings may participate as non-voting members.

The Unit Committees:

a) shall receive a report of the Unit Commission and transmit recommendations based on the report to the Central Committee;
b) review and recommend policy directions for the unit in accordance with the general policies determined by Central Committee and in the light of the work of Commissions of the Programme Units and the coordinating task of Central Committee;

c) recommend to Central Committee proposals for active programme directions and emerging concerns for Central Committee consideration and action;
d) make recommendations to Central Committee on matters arising from the General Secretary's and the Moderator's Reports;
d) make recommendations to Central Committee on other matters referred to them.

UNIT COMMISSIONS are appointed by Central Committee. Their task is to carry forward the purposes of the unit in the work of the WCC and the life of the member churches. The Programme Unit Commission will undertake a careful consideration of the priorities established by the Unit Committee and will translate these priorities into effective programmes. The Programme Unit Commission will appoint working groups as necessary and as feasible within budgetary constraints and accompany staff in the implementation of the programmatic work. The Commission will meet approximately every 18 months on a schedule timed to enable reporting to the Central Committee.

a) The Commissions are accountable to Central Committee and report to Central Committee through the respective Unit Committee of Central Committee;
b) The Central Committee delegates to the Commissions the work of translating priorities established by Central Committee into effective programmes in accordance with Central Committee policy, and that of reviewing and evaluating the programmes of the Units;
c) Commissions assist the programme work of the WCC by their reflection and analysis of the world situation in the light of the concerns of member churches;
d) Commissions appoint mandatory Working Groups when requested by Central Committee;
e) Commissions appoint ad hoc Working Groups as necessary and as feasible within budgetary constraints;
f) Commissions act as advocates and interpreters of the WCC, its policies and programmes;
g) The executive group of the Commission will be consulted by the executive director on staff contract renewal/non-renewal, staffing needs and plans in relation to programme priorities. Commissions will be informed of the staffing situation of the Unit;
h) Commissions should assist in developing the financial resources available for the work of the WCC;

i) Commissions provide oversight of the detailed planning and policy in relation to the funding of programmatic activities and projects within the overall policies and budget approved by Central Committee.

Membership

1) The four Programme Unit Commissions are normally composed of 25-40 persons, including not less than five members of Central Committee;
2) Members shall be selected in consultation with churches, on the basis of council-wide criteria for representation and on the basis of their qualifications for active and effective service on the Programme Unit Commission;
3) Members serve until the next Assembly;
4) Members have a responsibility to develop clear lines of communication with their respective churches and other constituencies to ensure a two-way sharing of information: sharing their church's concerns with the Commission, and keeping their church and region informed of the programmatic work of the unit;
5) WCC staff participate in Commission deliberations at the invitation of the moderator and the executive director who should ensure that the Commission benefits from their experience and expertise.

It was noted that similar reports on the mandate and responsibilities of Advisory Groups related to the General Secretariat Offices on Relationships and Communication would be presented to the Executive Committee in September. The full text would then be submitted to Central Committee for approval.

12. PUBLIC ISSUES

Rev. Charles Harper introduced background notes on five issues of particular current concern to the WCC, some of which were political in nature and touched on the life of member churches, while others had wider implications. Reports on recent team visits to a number of areas in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were available for information. Reference was also made to a number of statements and messages by the General Secretary in the period since Central Committee in August 1992.

The Executive Committee gave careful consideration to the following issues, taken as examples of the many conflict situations in the world, but decided not to make any public statements at this time.

A. Armenia/Azerbaijan

The Council has maintained a particular concern for Armenia in recent years for two major reasons: first, in helping to alleviate the suffering caused by the earthquake which hit the north of the country four years ago, and secondly, concern about the conflict raging over the disputed territory of Nagorno-Karabagh. This territory is claimed by both Armenians and Azerbaijanis for different historical and political - but not religious - reasons. The WCC considered it essential to ascertain whether the religious leaders on both sides might not together have a positive contribution to make towards bringing peace to the area.

A joint WCC/CEC (Conference of European Churches) staff delegation visited the area in November/December 1992, and met with political and community leaders as well as with refugees and others suffering from the effects of the conflict. On behalf of the WCC and CEC, they invited the religious leaders to meet on neutral territory.

A meeting took place under WCC auspices in Switzerland in February 1993 between His Holiness Vasken I, Patriarch Catholicos of All Armenians and Sheikh-ul-Islam Pasha-zadeh, Chairman of the Muslim Religious Board for Caucasia. After intensive negotiations, the two leaders signed a joint communiqué calling for a peaceful resolution of the problems dividing them, for the unconditional release of hostages, and for the humane treatment of prisoners-of-war. Furthermore, they gave their support to efforts being made by the United Nations and the CSCE to find a peaceful resolution to the conflict. They also announced the establishment of a United Humanitarian Relief Fund "to render assistance without distinction of nationality or faith to all those who suffer".

The WCC, together with the International Islamic Council for Daw'a and Relief, has agreed to continue giving all possible assistance to the two parties in their peacemaking efforts. A second meeting is planned, mainly to make practical arrangements for the establishment of the humanitarian fund.

The General Secretary pointed out that this was the first time the WCC had become involved as a direct partner with an international Muslim agency; he found it significant that there is now a desire among certain groups in the Muslim world to reach out towards the Christian community. They too are concerned about the rising tide of Islamic fundamentalism.

B. Former Yugoslavia

The tragic conflict in former Yugoslavia continued to have devastating consequences. A report from the UN Commission on Human Rights substantiates accusations of grave violations including summary executions, the arbitrary detention and treatment of prisoners and widespread occurrence of rape, as well as the particular suffering of children. The systematic violence carried out against women in the region was documented by an ecumenical women's team supported by the WCC in December 1992.

Less known is the position of the Serbian Orthodox Church (SOC) as it seeks to witness to the truth in an increasingly complex and violent situation. It is trying to fulfil its pastoral ministry and stands firmly against any further militarisation of the conflict. Following up on several previous visits, a team of WCC and CEC staff went in February to Serbia and Northern Bosnia, bearing a letter to Patriarch Pavle from the two general secretaries; this acknowledged the denunciation by the Patriarch and the Holy Synod of violence and brutality and offered the help of the ecumenical community in the Church's witness and service. The team was impressed by the humanitarian relief work being provided by the SOC to all sectors of the community in Bosnia, regardless of race or faith, and under increasingly dangerous conditions. After so many years of oppression and exclusion, the Church needs encouragement, and training for both clergy and laity in exercising its ministry in the various social institutions where they are active, and with victims of rape and other kinds of torture.

Contact has been maintained with the leadership of the SOC, and the WCC is supporting efforts to express an ecumenical presence in the region and new initiatives between church leaders. The SOC has insufficient infra-structure to cope with the needs of victims of civil war, torture and violence and measures are being taken to strengthen their capacities. A solidarity fund has been set up by the WCC to meet emergency needs, and attention is being given to support training for clergy and lay people. The Council is assisting the SOC in communicating with others in the ecumenical family, particularly where there is a dearth of reliable information on the extremely complex situation. WCC is also cooperating with the UN in developing effective mechanisms to monitor human rights violations.

It was clear from the ensuing discussion that there is much confusion because of distorted and inadequate reporting on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina. Several team visits to different areas in the conflict had taken place in the last few months, partly in order to obtain clear and reliable information on what is going on. (The

resulting written reports were helpful, but in some cases the situation is changing so quickly that they lose some relevance.)

Prof. Aagaard remarked on the fact that no solution is offered in these reports, nor is there sufficient attempt at any political analysis. In addition to being "a voice for the voiceless", such a political analysis is essential in order to provide a basis for political action. She warned of the danger of taking on such a potentially difficult engagement in relation to a Muslim body, stressing the fact that there are not sufficient staff resources to carry out yet another major undertaking. How can we show solidarity with the victims of this conflict in former Yugoslavia?

Dr Tolen agreed about the need for more clarity and in-depth analysis of what is happening, and some understanding of the political history of the region. We have never said that Christian values should permeate social life; we are saying that we have to risk our presence in some political situations. But what are the limits to this, and what are the responsibilities we assume when events in one of these political areas challenges what we believe as Christians? He proposed that, in the context of any future study on the church/state relationship, it should look more widely than simply what has happened in the former communist bloc.

His Holiness Pope Shenouda spoke as a representative of a church living in an Islamic country. There is little knowledge about the Christian church on the part of many Muslims and they are inclined to assume that Christians are united against Islam. They believe that Western Europe has done nothing to help the Muslims in Bosnia-Herzogovina. The WCC has published no statement saying that all persecution is contrary to our beliefs, and that we want to care not only for Christians but for all those in lands which are persecuted.

Metropolitan Kirill urged that member churches make all possible effort to influence their governments to participate more actively in finding a solution to the conflict. At the same time, violence and murder are sin and such evil must be condemned even if such acts are carried out on the basis of a wrong understanding. It is not enough to appeal for peace - we must seek peace with justice. A process of reconciliation is needed before the negotiations can be embarked upon, requiring the consideration of complicated historical problems which are the real cause of division in this region of former Yugoslavia. Of course it is difficult to interpret history, but when history is a reason for military conflict, then we must take action. It is clear that the genocide of both Serbs and Armenians is something that cannot simply be dismissed - it is part of people's memories and cannot but feature

in any negotiations aimed at a solution to the conflict and achieving peace with justice.

Mr Harper reiterated the importance of team visits, noting that we should be clearer about their purpose, be it primarily a fact-finding mission or a pastoral visit. Staff are aware of the need for political analysis and are working out methodologies which draw on our constituency. There are expectations of what the WCC is able to do, and this is also reflected in the work being done on the self-understanding of the Council.

Ms Gnanadason reported on the launching of the **Ecumenical Women's Solidarity Fund**, jointly set up by Unit IV's Europe Desk and the Women's team. Some funds have already been raised, and it is hoped to appoint a consultant who would work with women and the churches in developing programmes of support for women and children victims of the war in various parts of former Yugoslavia.

In response to a request, Ms Gnanadason spoke about the team visit by three women staff members to Zagreb in December 1992. It was arranged at short notice, she said, and was not intended as a visit to the churches but to the women in Zagreb. The group met with women in refugee camps and listened to what they had to say about their experiences. In their analysis, they condemned the use of rape as a weapon of war, and condemned violence of any kind committed against women by any of the sides in this conflict and anywhere in the world.

Ms Salter, a member of the February 1993 team visit to the SOC in Belgrade, explained that the report was not intended to be a political analysis but a record of what they had heard, both from the Patriarch and members of the SOC, and from others whom they had met. The group had tried to discover what could be the specific role of the churches in this conflict. She felt that the best way the WCC can help is to accompany the churches as they search for their specific role as peace-makers, and to help them answer questions such as how can the church be the church when there are so many forces struggling for power?

The General Secretary spoke of the wider implications, underlining the fact that information has become one of the weapons in such conflicts. The Council would not send teams if it had access to all the information and if all sides were equally free to speak. The ecumenical community tries to lend a public voice to those who cannot otherwise be heard, although the different voices here may not be in accord among themselves. With regard to the reports of such visits, these are written from within a specific context and should not be seen as public statements by the WCC.

Those reading such reports should take care how they interpret what is said, for they do not fully know the situation being described. It is important that we make the best and most responsible use of such reports.

At a later point, Dr Kaessmann proposed that for the next meeting of the Executive a clear listing be provided of the guidelines for different kinds of team visits and different ways of reporting on them, so that it is clear whether the material is for information, for discussion, or simply for internal use.

C. Africa

A number of conflict situations in Africa have worsened in recent months, affecting people's well-being, dignity and respect for human rights. Churches and NCCs have brought to the Council's attention numerous crises caused by civil strife, violent repression, discrimination or systematic abuse, such as in the Cameroon, Liberia, Togo, Zaire, Malawi, Rwanda, Burundi, Nigeria, Angola and Mozambique. The incidence of conflicts resulting from ethnic tensions is increasing. Member churches are often involved in attempts to prevent or resolve conflicts while serving those suffering the ravages of war. There is increasing cooperation with AACC in assessing delicate political developments, responding to human rights violations, and sharing strategies for the future.

Efforts are being made to accompany the churches more closely in conflict situations, by making interventions at international level including with the UN. Also in cooperation with AACC, the Council is studying emerging problems and seeking ways to respond to them, and how to strengthen the African churches' efforts to combat violence, defend human rights, and educate for effective participation in peace-making.

Two representative situations were mentioned specifically:

1) Sudan and the Horn of Africa

Renewed efforts are being made by the WCC and other international partners to bring peace to these areas. The WCC facilitated a meeting in early March bringing together representatives of the Sudan Council of Churches (in the north) and the New Sudan Council of Churches (in the south); they affirmed their unity, but are obliged to remain operationally separate because of the continuing conflict.

Dr Tolen referred to his presentation on Africa at Central Committee in September 1991, which included a recommendation that all WCC Units consider the Africa

situation as a priority area of work, though no precise formulation had been made. Meanwhile, the multi-party system has recuperated the power of the people; many who supported democratisation are now facing a backlash - the doctrine of national security seems to re-emerging in another form, and there is no respect for human rights. Consequently, Dr Tolen felt that the most important contribution the WCC could make would be to set up a programme promoting and defending human rights in Africa (on similar lines to the Human Rights Resources Office for Latin America in the 1980s). Africans must carry responsibility for their own situation, but they need an international network of support to counteract subversive actions by outside forces.

The crisis in Africa is not only political but also economic; the people should have the right to say what they want in terms of government, yet they are not strong enough to combat those with power and money. Where governments are elected by the people, they are often not in a position to fulfil the wishes of the people. People need to learn what democracy is before they can put it into practice. Church structures can help here, but more human and financial resources are needed in order to carry out the necessary training.

Ms Rantakari spoke from her experience of living in Southern Africa and she agreed that churches are taking an active role in educating people for democracy. But, she asked, what is meant by "democracy" in the African context? What kind of society are we educating people for? Bishop Okullu referred to Kenya's tradition of advocacy and prophetic ministry, but now that the country has held free elections, the question was how to participate in a meaningful way? People ask why the churches have lost their way - they have come so far but no longer know how to proceed. There were signs that civil war would break out soon in Kenya also.

2) South Africa

Serious obstacles have threatened peace and the political negotiation process in Africa during recent months. The September 1992 massacre at Boipatong challenged the integrity of the entire political process. Bilateral talks between the ANC and the government were resumed, and a preparatory meeting for the next round of multi-party negotiations took place in early March, prior to a multi-party conference scheduled for April to plan for the transition process. The churches are exercising prophetic witness in working responsibly for peace and justice. The SACC has pressed constantly for dialogue, insisting that a lack of settlement and prolonged fruitless negotiations will lead to "a disaster for the country and peoples". Programmes for education for democracy have been strengthened by the

churches, although these are hampered by restricted freedom of expression in some parts of the country.

The monitoring role of the international community and the WCC, through the Ecumenical Monitoring Programme on South Africa (EMPSA) is being carried forward and is seen to have helped to bring understanding and political rapprochement in South Africa. EMPSA's mandate to monitor violence, negotiations and elections is being implemented with four teams of ten persons each, from Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Kenya, the UK and the USA.

Ms Gcabashe spoke of the aggressive programme of education for democracy being carried out, noting that 87% of the population have never experienced an election and must learn how to vote. However, counter-efforts are being made to slow down the process towards elections by campaigns among the oppressed. The African peoples have been colonised for so long that they do not know what democracy is. In fact, Ms Gcabashe did not believe that democracy exists, even in Europe - certainly not as it is really meant to be.

In concluding this discussion, the General Secretary proposed that a draft minute be prepared by the Executive which would set down some policy lines for the period until January 1994 when Central Committee meets in South Africa. This was **agreed.**

At a later session, Dr Tolen shared the draft of a **Minute on Africa**, which, with some amendments, was adopted as follows:

> The Executive Committee of the World Council of Churches, meeting in Geneva 18-22 March 1993, **adopted** the following minute:
>
> In September 1991, the Central Committee of the WCC was informed of the critical challenges facing the people and nations of Africa, which affect their dignity, stability and even survival. Since that time, conditions have worsened amid civil conflict, violent repression and injustice. It becomes imperative that effective change occurs, towards lasting peace, the enabling of people to participate in making the decisions that affect their lives, and respect for the integrity of the human person and community. The churches as a social and moral force enjoy real and potential credibility in helping to bring about such change.

The World Council of Churches holds high the vision of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation as a guiding framework for working for a just and sustainable society. The WCC should encourage, accompany and support the churches and the ecumenical movement in Africa more vigorously, at all levels, to this end. The following proposals are made to the General Secretary for examination and implementation as soon as possible:

a) Establish a human rights desk for Africa, similar to that set up by the WCC in support of the churches in Latin America. Its mandate would include the gathering and circulation of information and documentation on human rights situations; the promotion of education for civil society; advocacy on behalf of people affected by human rights violations; and practical support for church-related initiatives and programmes in human rights;
b) Work with and strengthen a network to share actions and strategies among African and international ecumenical constituencies in the search for a just and sustainable society. The various dimensions of this work would be held together, i.e. advocacy for justice and human rights, conflict resolution, and support for participation in political processes, in order to bring pressure, make representation and intervene in various fora and at distinct levels, such as the United Nations, regional inter-governmental bodies and governments, and in partnership with churches and solidarity groups;
c) Monitor and contribute to processes of conflict resolution as an international ecumenical response in situations of grave tension or open conflict;
d) Take specific action to promote viable sustainable solutions to economic and social crises, with clear emphasis on political literacy.

The coordination of these tasks, and the staff assigned to their implementation, should be based in Unit III - Justice, Peace and Creation.

D. Haiti

Political and diplomatic pressures are being brought to bear on Haiti's de facto military-backed regime to bring it into negotiations with the government of exiled President Jean-Bertrand Aristide about a return to the rule of law and institutional democracy. The UN is playing a strong mediation role and hopes were high for a solution to the crisis in the near future.

Since the visit of President Aristide to the WCC in September 1991, the WCC and the CCC have arranged two visits to the churches, political sectors and civilian social organisations. There is evidence of systematic violation of human rights since the military coup in 1991, characterised by "severe, massive and persistent" repression carried out by the armed forces primarily against political opponents and rural peasant organisations. The WCC and the international ecumenical community has made representations to the UN and the OAS to exercise pressure for a return to democracy. A new programme monitoring the human rights situation is envisaged and the work of the churches in defending human rights is being strengthened.

In view of the delicate situation in Haiti, Ms Santana suggested that the subject be referred to a smaller group.

E. Guatemala

Peace negotiations, largely as a result of efforts by the churches internationally, began in July 1992 between the Guatemalan government and armed forces on the one hand, and the Guatemalan National Revolutionary Unity (URNG) on the other. Since then they have become deadlocked on the human rights issue. More recently, Guatemalan civil society, including sectors of both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches, have been more assertive in their desire to increase participation in negotiations for long-desired peace after decades of civil war. They have now formed the Civil Sector Coordinating Commission which represents more than one hundred religious, labour, indigenous and development groups and have received worldwide attention with the award of the 1992 Nobel Peace Prize to Ms Rigoberta Menchu Tum.

In close cooperation with CLAI, LWF and the NCCCUSA, the WCC has been accompanying the process of peace and reconciliation, supporting the Guatemalan churches' criteria and position in the current political dialogue. Ecumenical support and pastoral care were given to the several thousand Guatemalan exiles who returned under tense conditions from Mexico recently. Attempts to prevent armed attacks on the inter-ethnic indigenous communities in mountain areas have been strengthened.

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Ms Santana spoke of the 30 year blockade of **Cuba** by the US government on the basis of national security" during the Cold War. Instead of improving since the end of the Cold War, the situation has deteriorated and been made more rigid. Efforts

have been made through the churches, the NCCCUSA and the WCC to get the blockade ended, but in 1992 a law went through the US Congress to impose sanctions on countries that wished to establish relationships with Cuba.

Since the WCC has not made any statements on this situation, Ms Santana felt that some action should be taken to condemn the situation and the rigid sanctions being imposed.

Bishop Zacharias spoke of the current situation in **India**, which has become a melting pot with increasing religious tensions, and asked whether the WCC should not at least communicate its concern to the Prime Minister. The General Secretary felt however that analysis of the situation was needed before we take action, and as a body outside the communities involved, the WCC should be careful not to act in a way that might be detrimental. The feeling was that no statement or letter to the Prime Minister be sent at this stage, but rather that the Council initiate a process to analyse the situation. We should of course express our pastoral concern to our member churches there, and seek their advice towards a more focused initiative in whatever what would seem appropriate.

13. REPORT OF THE FINANCE SUB-COMMITTEE

At a session on the first day of the Executive, members of the Finance and OICD staff were given opportunity to explain in detail a number of proposals and recommendations which the Finance Sub-committee wished to make for approval by the Executive Committee. These were described a document entitled *Review of WCC Funds and Accounting Practices* (see item 4 below, and Appendix III).

At a later session, Ms Rantakari, Moderator of the Finance Sub-committee, presented the Sub-committee's report:

1) Report on the Preliminary 1992 Accounts
   The Sub-committee had received a report on the 1992 accounts. A number of suggestions were made regarding their presentation; a simpler, summary form of accounts presentation was desirable for the governing bodies, while the Finance Sub-committee and staff required more detailed accounts for working purposes.

   The Sub-committee recognised that 1992 would have to be regarded as a transitional year, presenting the new structure of the Council but using the

former accounting practices. Staff were asked to present the report and accounts in as simple and transparent a way as possible bearing in mind the comments of the Committee and the requirements of the Auditors. Noting that the Council balanced its budget overall in 1992, the Sub-committee recommended and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) to receive the preliminary accounts and report for 1992;
b) that the amount of SFr 500,000 each be allocated to the Retirement Fund, the Exchange Equalisation Reserve and Computer Information Services.

2) 1993 Budget Review

The Central Committee had accepted the preliminary budget for 1993 on the understanding that the Executive would keep it under review. Partly due to the fact that the staff team would not be complete until later in the year, and that a slightly higher level of income was anticipated, it appeared likely that the budget would balance in 1993. On the recommendation of the Sub-committee, the Executive Committee **approved** minor adjustments to the 1993 budget (amounting to a net saving of SFr 218,000), and asked the Finance Sub-committee to report again in September 1993.

3) Cambridge Associates

It was reported that Mr Troy Murray of Cambridge Associates had been in Geneva recently to review the Council's current situation. He had been pleased to note the new positive spirit in the house but pointed to two major tasks remaining: the need to raise more income, and some reorganisation of the accounting and reporting practices of the Council (see item 4. below).

Mr Murray was invited to report to the Sub-committee on his review of the Council's progress since the Cambridge Associates presented their original reports in 1991. In summary, it was clear that much work had been done, but there was no basic change in the fundamental economics of the WCC; the balanced budgets of the last two years were a respite and there should be no complacency, for the Council would be in the same position as in 1990 within 3-5 years unless the income development strategy was successful.

He felt that the reorganisation presented new opportunities to determine priorities. The next objective should be to increase cooperation in and between Units. The definition of the responsibilities of the Central and Executive Committees was clearer, leaving some tasks for the Commissions. Work still

needed to be done on how best to make decisions and communicate them to the House.

Budgetary and financial control appeared to have been strengthened considerably, with Finance Officers in each Unit. The next step was to change the accounting procedures. The Exchange Equalisation scheme had taken over the risk from the Units. Shared costs needed to be constantly tested to ensure that all concerned understood the system and felt that the cost was reasonable. It was necessary to keep reinforcing the fact that resources were limited and to plan consistently rather than responding to a crisis.

With regard to financial equilibrium, Mr Murray reminded the Sub-committee of the points made in the original report by the Cambridge Associates, and noted that some progress had been made. However, the gap between income and expenditure would again widen over the next 3-5 years, particularly because 70% of the operating budget was for staff costs and these continued to grow at a higher rate than inflation. Revenue had declined 1.3% since 1985 in real terms, expenditure by 2.9% (mostly as a result of action taken in the past two years). Income would probably continue to decline at 1% p.a. in real terms (1.5% for UDI). The deficit gap was growing more slowly than in their previous estimates - SFr 3.5m in 1994 or SFr 5m in 1998. To rectify the situation, either a further reduction in staff (or other expenses) or a real increase in income would be required, at a rate of 2.2% above the rate of inflation. He advised that the Council should articulate its goals, present programmes which are attractive to donors and keep a strict limit on the number of permanent staff (at the level of 270, or 256 full-time-equivalent level). He felt equilibrium was attainable and that a good start had been made on the way towards it.

4) Review of WCC Funds and Accounting Practices

Mr Davies said that, in response to an earlier request by the Executive, an attempt was being made to make accounting practices reflect the new structure, and to create greater transparency in the Council's finances. This was also one of the recommendations of the Cambridge Associates (referred to above). Until now a dual accounting system had been in use, i.e. Swiss francs and US dollars. The auditors had suggested that Swiss francs only be used in future for accounting purposes, although it would still be possible to make payments in other currencies as before.

Further details on the proposal were given by Mr Pettingell. In the past, only the operating budget had been considered in detail by the governing bodies, with brief reference being made to the project and trust funds that had passed through the Council's hands. Yet, about two-thirds of the WCC's turnover lies within these project and trust fund accounts. This means that some of the programmatic activity of the former sub-units was not subject to control by the governing bodies in the same way as the operating funds were. A new method of accounting for the future is therefore being proposed. The following recommendations were thus being made by the Sub-committee:

a) that the accounts structure be revised to a three-tier presentation showing General (Operating) Accounts, Activities (Programmatic) Accounts and Specific Project Accounts (as proposed in Appendix III) and that a report on progress be made to the Executive in September;
b) that WCC accounts in future be presented in one currency, namely the Swiss franc (whilst maintaining the ability to work in and pay out in a multitude of currencies as required);
c) that the Finance Sub-committee continue to keep in review the question of shared or redistributed costs, bringing recommendations for changes in policy whenever appropriate;
d) that the Finance Sub-committee be asked to bring recommendations on the use of operating balances and reserves, whilst ensuring that the Council always maintains adequate resources to maintain financial liquidity and to cover at least three months operating expenses in a crisis;
e) that the overall responsibility of the Central Committee and its Finance Committee for the finances and budgets of the Council be reaffirmed, whilst recognising that Unit Commissions have oversight of the detailed planning and policy on the funding of programmatic activities and projects within the overall policies and budget approved by the Central Committee;
f) that the 1992 Financial Report and Accounts be presented to the Executive Committee in September 1993, taking into account the new structure of the Council.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to these recommendations.

Dr Nababan noted the trend towards centralisation which is useful for control purposes, but he asked how this would affect the freedom of the Units to develop new initiatives. Ms Rantakari explained that the intention was to make the system clearer than before.

Mr Davies referred to the situation regarding fund balances. Units had previously been able to use one-third of their operating balance in any given year, but this had given a false idea of how much was actually available for programmatic work and led to overspending - part of the cause of the financial difficulties in the past few years.

Operating Balances and Reserves

Further discussion had taken place on recommendation d) above, and it was decided to ask staff to take the following guidelines into account in preparing their recommendations for the next meeting of the Finance Sub-committee:

a) The policy of maintaining the Emergency Reserve Fund and the Exchange Equalisation Reserve should remain as at present;
b) Minimum Fund Balances representing 15% of the operating costs of the Unit should be maintained;
c) Operating Fund Balances should be maintained at a level determined by the Unit Director and the Assistant General Secretary, as deemed necessary for the normal functioning and financial needs of the Unit;
d) Operating Funds at the end of the year in excess of the amount agreed in point 3. above, should be available for the use of the Unit in ensuing years according to the following guidelines:

   i) Funds can be used for Unit-wide core programmes which are consistent with the Unit's priorities and work;
   ii) In such cases, these funds should contribute to longer term plans (2,3 or 4 years) for carrying out the work of the Unit;
   iii) The allocation of these funds shall be done in consultation with the appropriate representatives of the Unit Commission;
   iv) Such funds shall not be used to begin new programme initiatives unless the Finance Sub-committee gives specific permission;
   v) Such funds shall not be used to support new staff positions. These (i.e. in addition to the Unit's agreed allocation of the total staff of 256 FTEs = "full-time equivalents") shall be approved only when funding for the term of a contract is assured, and this would be approved as part of the regular operating budget and with respect to the decision-making process for staff posts.

The Sub-committee also asked that consideration be given to the criteria for the use of the General (Undesignated) Operating Fund Balance. Moreover, they asked that thought be given as to how to resource new initiatives, bearing

in mind the previous decision to make interest on undesignated funds available for this purpose.

Prof. Aagaard, as a member of the Sub-committee, commended the efforts being made to improve the transparency of the Council's financial infrastructure. She pointed out that it was impossible for the Executive Committee to monitor all the funds available to each individual unit: that was a task for the respective Unit Commissions.

5) WCC Salary Scales

The Sub-committee had received a comprehensive report on the present remuneration policy of the Council in response to the request of the Executive Committee for "an external, professional review of the whole WCC remuneration system". It was pointed out that such a review might cost SFr 500,000 and that the Executive Committee would need to lay down a clear mandate and policy quidelines for such a review. After discussion, the Sub-committee recommended and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) to ask the Finance Sub-committee to set up a review of the WCC's remuneration scheme by a group of individuals within the Council's sphere, who have professional skills and experience to bring to bear on the subject, to give general advice to the Committee; staff would work out the details in practical terms and implement them;
b) that seniority supplements should either be eliminated or be made pensionable as soon as possible;
c) to endorse the principle that cost-of-living increases should be made to staff unless the financial situation of the Council makes this imprudent;
d) that the 1% per annum additional increase, agreed for a period of five years from 1st January 1991 in order to bring staff remuneration more in line with Geneva rates, be discontinued after the end of 1993 and therefore be eliminated from the 1994 and 1995 budgets.

It was suggested that the Review Group comprise: Ms B. Rantakari; Mr J. Briggs (member of Finance Committee); a member of Central Committee; a Personnel Consultant from Geneva; a Personnel Consultant from elsewhere; staff: Rev. C. Sintado (Secretary); Mr H. Pettingell; and a Unit director.

6) Implementation of the Income Development Strategy

The Sub-committee had discussed a report on the implementation of the strategy paper "Providing the Resources" approved by Central Committee in

August 1992. Reports were also received on the Ecumenical Development Initiative in the USA and on developments in North-East Asia with the forthcoming Consultation to be held in Hong Kong in May 1993.

It was felt that the concern relating to member churches which make no contribution to the Council should be pursued with the Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations (OCER). In some places, the possibilities of support from individual donors should be explored. The method of seeking member contributions may vary greatly in different parts of the world and should also be considered together with the OCER.

7) Staffing of OICD

In a closed session, the Sub-committee had considered the staffing needs for the Office for Income Coordination and Development. It was proposed that a new director be appointed, together with a person skilled in writing (funding proposals, reports and general fund-raising materials), and that the administrative support for OICD be brought up to strength. The question of replacing the associate director should be kept under review. As indicated in the Income Development Strategy document approved by Central Committee in 1992 (see Minutes, appendix IX), it was clear that income development was an area where it was essential to have adequate staff to maintain existing levels of contributions and to develop new sources.

The Sub-committee recommended, and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) to approve the above proposals for the future staffing of OICD; to authorise the immediate appointment of a new director and of the proposed writer and to ask the General Secretary to appoint regional fund-raisers, initially on a consultancy basis, in appropriate areas;
b) to ask the General Secretary to review the overall staffing of OICD to ensure that it is adequate to maintain the Council's existing income and to develop new resources as requested by Central Committee.

8) Visser 't Hooft Endowment Fund

There was considerable disappointment that the Visser 't Hooft Endowment Fund had not developed as had been hoped. The Council had made an initial contribution of SFr 115,000, but there seemed little likelihood of this being recovered and the Auditors advise that it be written off. Either there must be a substantial investment by the Council so that a person can be employed to raise funds, or the Trustees should be advised to consider winding up the

Fund. Differing views were expressed in the Sub-committee and it was decided that the matter be tabled until September.

The Sub-committee recommended, and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) to ask the Assistant General Secretary to consult with the General Secretary and the Trustees of the Visser 't Hooft Endowment Fund and to report to the next meeting about the prospects of the Fund and the WCC's involvement in it;
b) that the outstanding balance on the Visser 't Hooft Endowment Fund account be written off.

9) Budget process 1994-1995

A preliminary budget for 1994 had been presented to Central Committee in August 1992, showing an anticipated deficit of SFr 2.8 million. For the Executive Committee in September 1993 a revised 1994 budget would be prepared, together with a preliminary budget for 1995. It would be at that stage that, with a full staff and programme of activities, deficits might again begin to occur in the "operating budgets", though by then it was hoped that the effects of new style accounting and limited use of operating balances might begin to affect the overall conception of the Council's performance.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to ask the Finance Sub-committee to present a revised budget for 1994 and a preliminary budget for 1995 at the September 1993 meeting, taking into account the Council's new approved accounting structure.

10) Finance Seminar

In August 1992, the Finance Committee of Central Committee approved a paper "The Continuing Process", which outlined the steps required in order to deal with some of the outstanding financial concerns of the Council. It was agreed that a Finance Seminar be held in the mid-1993, to include the new General Secretary and Unit executive directors. The Seminar should draw up recommendations on the major issues, present them to the Executive Committee in September and then produce a Financial Strategy paper for Central Committee in January 1994.

The Executive Committee **agreed** that the proposed Finance Seminar be held later in 1993 when the new executive directors have taken up their responsibilities.

11) Income Projections and Special Funding

The Sub-committee had considered a report from OICD on income projections and special funding, and noted that a modest increase of 4% or SFr 1.4 million was projected for 1993, although there was no increase or even a reduction in contributions from some major donor sources, particularly in North America; the 20% devaluation of the Swedish Krone would also have an effect.

Regarding **special funding,** it was reported that:

- the cost of the NCCs meeting in Hong Kong had been covered by income;
- for the Faith & Order Conference, SFr 420,000 is still to be found, but there is confidence that this can be covered;
- there should be sufficient income to meet the minimum costs for EGGYS;
- for the Mid-Decade: Churches in Solidarity with Women, SFr 207,000 is still to be found out of a budget of SFr 835,000.

The Sub-committee recommended and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) that the Investment Advisory Group be requested to consider the position of the Swedish currency and to suggest a budget rate for the next three years so that Unit income can be protected from the Exchange Equalisation Reserve;
b) that the Coordinator of the Women's Programme together with OICD be encouraged to renew the funding appeals for the Mid-Decade programme to ensure that the target can be reached.

12) Audit Committee

The Sub-committee had considered the report of the Audit Committee, which had indicated its satisfaction with the new financial controls in the Council and welcomed the proposals for WCC Funds and Accounting Practices (see item 4 above) including single currency accounting.

The Audit Committee had recommended that the Council have an internal auditor, reporting directly to the General Secretary and the Audit Committee, but working closely with the AGS, the Comptroller and finance staff. Recognising that, in the present financial climate, a permanent appointment would be difficult, they recommend a two year consultancy during this period of transition in accounting procedures and computer packages. The funding would have to come from the amount set aside for the change in computer

technology and would reduce the sum required for outside assistance in setting this up. In principle the appointment of an independent person able to advise the Council on procedures and methods of working, should be able to save the Council considerable work and costs.

This proposal gave rise to considerable discussion. Mr Davies explained that an internal auditor, as opposed to an external one, would be a full-time staff member, not responsible for the Council's accounting functions, but keeping under review the way in which accounts are handled and in a position to make recommendations for improvements. He stressed that such a person could be of great assistance in implementing the new computer-based accounting system because he/she would be detached from those involved in the process.

The General Secretary pointed out that this would entail a major change in policy, and was not something on which a quick decision could be made. Such a matter should be discussed first in the SEG before being brought to the Executive Committee for action.

Dr Tolen **proposed** that a decision on the subject be postponed until September in view of the need for greater clarity and rationale.

Ms Rantakari said that similar concerns to those expressed by the General Secretary had been mentioned in the Finance Sub-committee and she would agree to the issue being discussed more thoroughly internally before presenting it to the Executive for decision.

The Executive Committee **voted in favour** of Dr Tolen's proposal that the matter be deferred until September.

13) Apartment Building Project

It was reported that building work on the new apartment block had commenced in January 1993 and the contractors hoped that it would be completed by mid-1994. The Housing Committee was beginning to consider some of the matters related to the allocation of apartments and the management of the project.

14) Land Exchange

Since the last meeting of the Committee, when a proposal for the exchange of land relating to the Council's site at Grand-Saconnex was considered, negotiations had taken place with the President of the Department of Public

Works of the Canton of Geneva. As a result of these negotiations, and on the advice of the Council's advisers, an agreement had been reached as follows:

a) an exchange should now be agreed of 6,790 m2 of land owned by the WCC on the North and West sides of the present site for an identically sized plot to the South and East of our site, which are currently owned by the State but have been used by the Council (by agreement, without charge) for many years;
b) the land to the South and East consists of the main access to the front door of the Centre, with the car parking there and the access to the main car park and some of the actual parking space;.
c) the land to the North and West comprises ground between the library and the main Route de Ferney which, together with strips of land they already own there, will enable the State to permit a modest development for international organisation development;
d) since the size of the sites is identical, there will be no (financial) consideration;
e) the building rights on the two sites will also be identical. In Switzerland, in development zones, it is the development potential of the whole site which is taken into consideration for valuation and potential development purposes, not the individual "parcels" which make up the site. The effect of this is that the WCC total site area will enable the Council to increase substantially the buildings on its site.
f) the State will accept a basic level (the same as on the WCC site) as the maximum level of development to safeguard the Council against any major development on the released land;
g) in any case, there are strict regulations about what is built in such a zone and the Council would be in a good position to prevent an unsuitable development under the strict planning laws of the country;
h) the exact location of the new boundaries will be worked on by our architects to ensure minimum disturbance to the WCC site and facilities;
i) the lawyer will scrutinise the legal exchange agreement carefully to ensure that the Council's best interests are fully safeguarded;
j) the State will meet the cost of re-locating car parking spaces, boundary fences, etc. and would meet the survey and registration costs of the transaction (the only costs to the WCC will be for our architect and legal adviser);
k) the President of the Dept of Public Works indicated that any development on the site may not be for some years yet, and in the meantime he would authorise the Council to continue to use the land taken over by the State;
l) although the final road layout has not been approved (a process which may take many years), we were assured that any further adjustments to our site would be minimal.

According to the Council's lawyers and professional advisers, this arrangement would safeguard the WCC's interests for the future and, though there might eventually be another building on the North side, this should not detract

from the value or the amenities of our site. Further, the arrangement ensures that the Council has adequate legal access to its site (for the first time) and potential to develop its own buildings should it wish to do so. The lawyers therefore advise the Executive Committee to accept the exchange of land in principle, subject to their being able to negotiate a contract which they believe will serve the Council's best interests.

The Sub-committee recommended, and the Executive Committee **agreed**:

a) to the exchange, without financial consideration, of WCC land which is on the Northwest of the Ecumenical Centre site at Grand-Saconnex, for an equally sized piece of land owned by the State of Geneva on the Southeast side of the Council's property;
b) to authorise the General Secretary to take the necessary steps to implement the exchange, subject to his being satisfied that the terms and conditions of the contract are fair and reasonable and in the best interests of the Council.

15) Bossey Property

The proposal for the development of the old barn at Petit-Bossey as a research and study centre was deferred for consideration at the September meeting.

However, a report on the condition of the main property, particularly the roofs and certain external parts, was received from the Finance Officer of Unit I, which included an estimate of SFr 2,427,000 for renovation and refurbishment work needed to restore the fabric of the existing buildings and bring them up to a reasonable standard of convenience for students and guests.

Due to the fact that any delay in starting this work would risk even higher maintenance costs in the future, the Sub-committee **recommended** that:

> work on the repair and renovation of the property at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey be commenced and that a sum of up to SFr 2 million be made available for this purpose from the Council's General (Undesignated) Operating Fund.

A question was asked concerning the difference in the two figures mentioned above: what was the reason for witholding Sfr 427,000 of the estimated costs? Mr Davies explained that the amount of Sfr 2 million was the maximum that can be made available from the general operating fund, and additional funds were being

sought for Bossey through the Ecumenical Development Initiative. This sum of SFr 2 million would be sufficient to do the most urgent part of the repair work.

Dr Kaessmann proposed that mention be made of the additional amount that would be required at a later point. With this amendment, the Executive Committee **agreed:**

> that work on the repair and renovation of the property at the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey be put in hand and that a sum of up to SFr 2 million be made available for this purpose from the Council's General (Undesignated) Operating Fund, on the understanding that a further estimated amount of Sfr 427,000 will be needed in due course; and that the matter be reviewed in January 1994.

16) Retirement Fund

The Sub-committee had received a report on the work of the Retirement Fund Board, which would meet following this Executive, and noted that, to make seniority supplements pensionable (one reason for the allocation of SFr 500,000 to the Fund in 1992, as agreed above - item 5), the cost to the Council would be approximately: SFr 20,000 per annum in addition to the initial capital injection.

It was also noted that it had not so far proved necessary to "charge" the Retirement Fund up to SFr 60,000 pa for a staff person to service the Fund.

17) Other Ecumenical Organisations

Consultations had been taking place with the LWF with a view to finding ways of cooperating with them and sharing resources in the areas of personnel, accounting and computer information services.

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The Moderator expressed particular thanks on behalf of the Executive Committee to Ms Midge Béguin-Austin for her commitment and hard work during her 14 years with the Office for Income Coordination and Development, and wished her God's blessing for her future.

14. REPORT OF THE PROGRAMME SUB-COMMITTEE

Rev. Nélida Ritchie, moderator of the Sub-committee, presented the report on programme matters not dealt with elsewhere in these minutes.

A. Programme Units

The **Activities Reports** of the four Programme Units were received for information. After highlighting some aspects and discussing a number of questions and issues raised by members of the Sub-committee, it was decided to pass on the following comments to staff:

Unit I - Ecumenical Theological Education (ETE)
The Programme Sub-committee noted that there is a need for further analysis regarding the link between the two dimensions of ETE: residential and regional. Members of the group asked for an evaluation of the Ecumenical Institute, Bossey: its orientation, standard of teaching, methods of recruitment, and themes for the Graduate School.

Prof. Aagaard requested that time be made in September for a discussion on the proposals for a world consultation on the Viability of Theological Education in Today's World, as this could indicate a potential shift in some of our policies.

Unit I - Lay Participation towards Inclusive Community
As reported by the General Secretary and staff, this stream will be re-defined and reorganised in view of the recent discussion on laity concerns in the WCC. A process has started in this sense which will continue until the next meeting of Central Committee when a proposal for structural reorganisation will be made. Lay centres and movements will be part of this programme.
The Unit should give more attention to local ecumenism, as well as to the ecumenical life and witness of local communities and movements.

Unit III - Ecumenical Monitoring Programme on South Africa (EMPSA)
The Sub-committee received a report on the EMPSA which it discussed with interest; it made the following recommendations for approval by the Executive Committee:

a) Taking into account the projection that the elections in South Africa may not take place before April 1994, and in view of the request expressed by the General Secretary of the SACC for international church monitors to

continue their presence in the country after the elections, the Sub-committee proposed that the EMPSA continue to function for three months beyond the elections;

b) Noting that questions as well as proposals were raised during the Executive's plenary discussion on South Africa about the need for monitoring in other Southern African countries, the Sub-committee took up the issue and discussed possible expansion of the mandate of the monitoring programme. However, in light of the limited human and financial resources available for such initiatives, the Sub-committee proposed that EMPSA concentrate on South Africa unless the current limitations of human and financial resources are overcome.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to these recommendations.

Ms Gcabashe expressed thanks to the WCC on behalf of the SACC for its decision to prolong this process.

Unit III - Population Issues

The Sub-committee discussed this subject which had been raised in plenary, noting that 1994 is the year of population set by the United Nations. It is anticipated that there will be considerable discussion on many aspects of this subject and member churches would need to have some guidance from the World Council. Concerned that the WCC take full part in any discussion on population issues, the Sub-committee urged the Executive to request the General Secretary to take the necessary initiative to ensure that the WCC and its member churches may be prepared. In doing so, attention needed to be drawn to the political, economic, religious as well as socio-cultural dimensions of the population discussion.

The Executive Committee **agreed**.

Unit III - Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation (JPIC)

Dr Kaessmann, referring to the Unit-wide programmes in which Unit III is currently engaged, urged that further steps be taken to ensure that JPIC is a central priority in the Unit's work, and that the theological process begun together with Unit I should continue. She moved the following recommendation:

that Unit III undertake further concrete steps to make the JPIC process the central priority of its work, including development of the ten affirmations

from the JPIC World Convocation (Seoul, Korea, 1990) into a "social catechism", and concentration on the issues of theology of life and political ethics.

The Executive Committee **voted in favour** of this recommendation.

Unit IV - Round Tables:
Recognising the importance of the Round Tables instrument as a comprehensive way of approaching and working with member churches and partners, and
noting the increasing interest in Round Tables as one model for furthering inter-unit cooperation,
the Executive Committee **affirmed** the Round Table evaluation process being undertaken by Unit IV, and **requested** that this evaluation include careful consultation with Units I, II and III, together with the Offices of the General Secretariat.

B. Relationships

1) Office of Church and Ecumenical Relations
The Sub-committee requested that a set of guidelines be drawn up for use by member churches with regard to protocol for inviting WCC staff to visit the regions. Such guidelines might include:

a) staff expertise that can be made available to churches;
b) time lines for inviting persons;
c) costs to the churches;
d) to whom invitations should go, e.g. the General Secretary, involving coordination by the OCER, to Unit directors, to individual staff (if necessary, in some specific cases);
e) criteria for inviting staff, e.g. should ecumenical events have higher priority than a single member church event? do requests need to be endorsed by regional/national ecumenical bodies?

Some thought should also be given to the ways in which NCCs/REOs involved can have these points clarified in guidelines for WCC cooperation with these ecumenical partners.

2) Office of Inter-Religious Relations
The Sub-committee received the activities report and made the following comments:

- It would be advisable to seek the participation of the Jerusalem Patriarchate in the proposed Christian-Jewish-Muslim meeting on the significance of Jerusalem;
- In the theological studies on Judaism in Unit I, distinction should be made in the use of terms such as "dialogue", "common witness", etc. as they relate to inter-church relations and inter-religious relations;
- In the follow-up on the questions of the role of religion in conflict situations, Hinduism and other religions caught up in conflicts should also be included.

The Programme Sub-committee made the following specific recommendations:

a) that the OIRR, along with other relevant Programme Units, take the initiative to explore the political, social and economic dimensions of inter-religious conflicts; such a reflection to be made first in respect to the continent of Africa;
b) that the General Secretary be asked to study the effects of the new programmatic organisation of the WCC on the inter-faith concern as a whole with a view to making specific recommendations when the structure comes under review; these should include:
   i) the division of the concerns held together in the former sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Other Faiths;
   ii) the place of the Office within the new structure;
   iii) the size of the Office in relation to its mandate.

The Executive Committee **agreed** to these recommendations.

C. Third International Consultation of National Councils of Churches

A brief written report on this Consultation, which took place in February 1993 in Hong Kong, had been shared with the Executive Committee for information. It was noted that a more detailed report and analysis of the implications for WCC/NCC relationships would be presented to Central Committee in 1994, after consideration by the Executive in its September meeting.

In discussion, some concern was expressed about the formation of a Continuation Committee, lest this were to open the way to a new set of structures on behalf of NCCs. The General Secretary affirmed that some of the difficulties had been identified during the preparatory process for the Consultation. The WCC should not be seen as the responsible body for the meeting, although it had provided logistical assistance.

Dr Raiser pointed to the fact that more than half of the number of NCCs which are officially in association with the WCC now include Roman Catholic membership; some of these are experiencing the problem of a double loyalty because they cannot maintain the same kind of direct relationship with the WCC as before, since questions of relationships have to be submitted formally to a decision-making process of the respective national Bishops' conference. This may be the beginning of something that could change processes at national and even local level, and we will have to determine our strategy accordingly.

Prof. Aagaard asked that an evaluation of the Consultation be made, and that time would be given in the September Executive for a full discussion of the issues involved.

D. Ecumenical Library

Ms Ritchie reported that the Sub-committee had expressed interest and concern about the implementation of a project to combine the central WCC Library and the Bossey Library; it also noted that funds were to be sought in order to provide for the necessary care to be taken of the archives which are in a serious physical condition. Dr Tsetsis affirmed that there are many treasures in the archives that were in danger of disintegrating for lack of appropiate attention.

The General Secretary assured the Executive that a staff person had been appointed to work on this, but that special funds were required - perhaps in the form of an Endowment - because of the delicate and long-term nature of the task to be done.

E. Christian/Jewish Relations

Archbishop Keshishian requested further information about a consultation being planned through cooperation between the OIRR, the Holy See's Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews, the Pontifical Council for Inter-religious Dialogue, and the LWF. This would bring together Jews, Christians and Muslims mainly from Israel/West Bank-Gaza to a colloquium entitled **"The Spiritual Significance of Jerusalem for Jews, Christians and Muslims"**, to take place in May 1993.

Dr Hans Ucko explained that this was a response to a concern expressed at the Canberra Assembly; its aims is to facilitate dialogue on an issue that is surrounded with a particular religious attention in all three religious communities. He had been asked to follow up this initiative by the former General Secretary, and had worked

in close collaboration with the other bodies mentioned above. He stressed that the consultation should not be seen as a meeting of representatives of organisations but of individual persons - scholars, theologians - who have a special knowledge about Jerusalem.

Dr Ariarajah, who was director of the former Sub-unit on Dialogue, affirmed that this had been seen as an ongoing activity of that Sub-unit and was not intended to be on a level which would have required approval by the governing bodies.

Archbishop Keshishian expressed regret that neither the Officers nor the Executive had been informed of this consultation previously; because of its very nature it is more than an ongoing activity. Dr Nababan requested that a written report on the consultation be given to the Executive in September.

15. REPORT OF THE STAFFING AND NOMINATIONS SUB-COMMITTEE

A. Staffing matters

At a closed session on Monday 22 March, Dr Nababan, moderator of the Sub-committee on Staffing and Nominations, presented the report.

The Executive Committee **authorised** the General Secretary to proceed with the following appointments and contract extensions, the legal obligations of the World Council of Churches to be binding only as from the actual signing by both parties of the corresponding contracts or contract extensions. (Text approved by Central Committee, Geneva, January 1987.)

1) Appointment of Unit Staff

Unit I

Professor Ion Bria (Romania, Romanian Orthodox Church [Eastern]) as Executive Director from 1 April 1993 until 30 June 1994 (will complete 21 years 3 months' service)

Unit II

Rev.Ana Langerak (USA/LA, Lutheran Church of Costa Rica) as Executive Director for four years from an agreed date

Rev. Kokou Ada (Togo, Evangelical Presbyterian Church of Togo) as Executive Secretary for Evangelism for four years from an agreed date

Ms Diana Smith (UK, Anglican) as Executive Secretary for Health and Learning Materials for four years from an agreed date

Unit III

Rev. Samuel Kobia (Kenya, Methodist Church in Kenya) as Executive Director for four years from an agreed date

Ms Thembisile Cheryl Majola (South Africa, Anglican) as Executive Secretary, Women and Development, for four years from an agreed date

Mr Dwain Epps (USA, Presbyterian Church [USA]) as Executive Secretary, Public Issues/International Affairs, for four years from an agreed date

Unit IV

Rev. Myra Blyth (UK, Baptist Union of Great Britain) as Executive Director for four years from an agreed date (will complete 11 years' service)

2) Appointment of Deputy General Secretary

Dr Nababan informed the Executive Committee that the position of Deputy General Secretary (Relationships) would become vacant with the retirement of Prof. Todor Sabev on 31 August 1993, and it was proposed to fill this vacancy by internal transfer as provided for in Staff Regulations II 1.01:

A vacancy notice shall be issued for all vacant posts provided that no internal appointment (for grades 7-10) has been decided upon by the Executive or Central Committees. This notice shall give a brief description of the functions and responsibilities involved, specify the qualifications required and indicate the grading of the post.

The Sub-committee recommended that:

Rev. Dr Wesley Ariarajah (Sri Lanka, Methodist Church) be appointed Deputy General Secretary for five years from 1 September 1993.

The Executive Committee **voted in favour** of this recommendation, on the understanding that it would be communicated to members of Central Committee inviting them to cast a postal vote by 31 May 1993. The appointment would thus only be ratified after positive votes from a majority of Central Committee members had been received.

3) Other General Secretariat Appointments

Office of the General Secretary

Ms Jeanne Becher (USA, Episcopal) as Assistant to the General Secretary for four years from 1 April 1993 (will complete 17 years 5 months' service)

Church and Ecumenical Relations

Mr Huibert van Beek (Netherlands, Swiss Protestant Church Federation) as Executive Secretary for three years from 1 October 1993 (extension of present contract) (will complete 18 years' service)

Mr Georges Lemopoulos (Turkey, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople [Eastern]) Executive Secretary for Orthodox Studies and Relations, Unit II, be appointed Executive Secretary from an agreed date, and that his contract be extended for three years from 1 February 1994 (will complete 10 years' service)

Department of Communication

Rev. John Newbury (UK, Methodist Church) as Press and Information Officer for four years from an agreed date

Office for Income Coordination and Development

Mr Günter Rath (Federal Republic of Germany, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria [EKD]) Associate Director, as Director from 1 September 1993, and that his contract be extended for three years from 1 June 1994 (will complete 7 years' service).

4) Contract Extensions

All the contract extensions listed below are for three years unless otherwise stated:

Unit I

Dr Jacques Nicole, (Switzerland, Swiss Protestant Church Federation) Director, Ecumenical Institute, from 1 July 1994 (will complete 7 years' service)

Dr Judo Poerwowidagdo (Indonesia, Javanese Christian Churches in Central Java) Tutor/Executive Secretary, from 1 September 1994 (will complete 7 years' service)

Unit II

Ms Teny Pirri-Simonian (Lebanon, Armenian Apostolic Church [Oriental]) Executive Secretary for Christian Education from 1 July 1994 (will complete 10 years 6 months' service)

Unit III

Mr Michel Monjol (France, Roman Catholic Church) Finance Officer, from 1 April 1994 (will complete 18 years 9 months' service)

Ms Anu Talvivaara (Finland, Orthodox Church of Finland [Eastern]) Executive Secretary for Youth, from 1 September 1994 (will complete 7 years' service)

Unit IV

Mr Muhungi Kanyoro (Kenya, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania) Director, Ecumenical Church Loan Fund, from 1 April 1994 (will complete 8 years 2 months' service)

Dr Kyung Seo Park (South Korea, Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea (PROK) Executive Secretary for Asia, from 1 April 1994 (will complete 15 years' service)

Mr Patrick Taran (USA, Society of Friends General Conference) Executive Secretary for Migration, from 1 July 1994 (will complete 7 years' service)

General Secretariat

Church and Ecumenical Relations

Mr Huibert van Beek (Netherlands, Swiss Protestant Church Federation) as Executive Secretary for three years from 1 October 1993 (extension of present contract) (will complete 18 years' service)

Mr Georges Lemopoulos (Turkey, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople [Eastern]) Executive Secretary for Orthodox Studies and Relations, Unit II, be appointed Executive Secretary from an agreed date, and that his contract be extended for three years from 1 February 1994 (will complete 10 years' service)

Department of Communication

Mr Jan Kok (Netherlands, The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands) Director, from 1 May 1994 (will complete 24 years' service)

Mr Marlin VanElderen (USA, Christian Reformed Church in North America) at present Editor of *One World*, as Executive Editor for three years from 1 October 1993 (will complete 14 years' service)

Personnel Office

Rev. Carlos Sintado (Argentina, Evangelical Methodist Church of Argentina) Director, from 1 July 1994 (will complete 16 years 6 months' service)

Office for Income Coordination and Development

Mr Günter Rath (Federal Republic of Germany, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Bavaria [EKD]) Associate Director, as Director from 1 September 1993, and that his contract be extended for three years from 1 June 1994 (will complete 7 years' service).

Finance

Mr Chien Chun Wang (Republic of China (Taiwan), China Evangelical Lutheran Church), Supervisor, Accounting Services, for one year from 1 October 1993 (will complete 22 years 1 month's service)

In response to a question about the Communication Office, the General Secretary pointed out that it was unfortunate that five programme staff had left through attrition in the period since the Canberra Assembly, which had left the Office seriously understaffed. In spite of extensive efforts, it was proving difficult to find suitably experienced candidates to fill the vacancies.

5) Vacancies

Unit I:	Director of the Secretariat of Faith and Order
	Executive Secretary, Faith and Order/Ecclesial Unity stream
Unit II:	Executive Secretary, Urban Rural Mission
	Executive Secretary, Health and Healing
Unit IV:	Executive Secretary for Refugees
	Executive Secretary for Europe

General Secretariat:

Office of Communication: Magazine Editor

OICD: Proposals and Reports Coordinator

The Executive Committee **agreed** to give power to the Officers to fill urgent vacancies that must be filled prior to its next meeting.

6) Departures

It was reported that the following staff members have left, or would leave, the service of the World Council of Churches on the dates indicated:

Unit I

Ms Silke-Petra Bergjan (Federal Republic of Germany, Evangelical Reformed Church in North-West Germany) Executive Secretary, on 30 September 1993 (will complete one year ten months' service)

Rev. Dr Nicolas-Gennadios Limouris (Greece, Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople [Eastern]) Executive Secretary, on 30 June 1993 (will complete 10 years' service)

Unit II

Canon Kenith David (South Africa, Anglican) Coordinator, Urban Rural Mission, on 31 August 1993 (will complete 10 years 3 months' service)

Dr Jorge Maldonado (Ecuador, Covenant Church of Ecuador) Executive Secretary, Programme on Family Education, on 15 September 1993 (will complete 4 years 7 1/2 months' service)

Unit III

Mr OH, Jae Shik (South Korea, Presbyterian Church in the Republic of Korea [PROK]) Executive Secretary/Convener Ad Interim, on 30 June 1993 (will complete 5 years' service)

Unit IV

Mr Abel Mbilinyi (Tanzania, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania) Secretary for African Refugees, on 31 January 1993 (completed 4 years' service)

General Secretariat

Office of the General Secretary

Professor Todor Sabev (Bulgaria, Bulgarian Orthodox Church (Eastern)) Deputy General Secretary (Relations), on 31 August 1993 (will complete 14 years 2 months' service)

Department of Communication

Mr Kenneth Mubu (Zambia, Baptist Church) Press Officer and EPS Editor (English), on 31 August 1993 (will complete 3 years' service)

Office for Income Coordination and Development

Ms Midge Béguin-Austin (USA, Christian Church [Disciples of Christ]) Director, on 15 August 1993 (will complete 14 years' service)

7) Consultants

It was reported that the following consultants were appointed by the General Secretary since the last Executive Meeting in August 1992:

Unit II

Dr Eva Ombaka (Tanzania, Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania) Technical Advisor on Pharmaceuticals, for one year from 1 January 1993

Unit III

Ms Nicole Fischer (Switzerland, Swiss Protestant Church Federation) for one year from 1 April 1993

Rev. Charles Harper (USA, Presbyterian Church [USA]) for one year from 1 August 1993

General Secretariat

Computer Information Service

Mr Robert Varga (Switzerland, Roman Catholic Church) for one year from 1 January 1993.

Dr Tolen referred to the "nine-year rule" which had been in place for some years prior to 1987, and asked that the possibility of reviving this rule be looked at when the whole issue of staffing procedures is discussed again.

B. Nominations

In a closed session, Dr Nababan presented the report of the Nominations Sub-committee;

a) Membership of Unit Commissions

Unit II: The Sub-committee recommended, and the Executive Committee **agreed**, that Prof. Ivan Dimitrov (Eastern Orthodox, male, lay) from Bulgaria, replace the late Metropolitan David of Georgia.

Unit IV: The Sub-committee requested the Unit IV Executive Group to bring a new proposal for the replacement of Archbishop Timothy of Lydda, who had resigned.

16. DATE AND PLACE OF NEXT MEETING

The General Secretary explained that it had been necessary to make a slight change in the dates of the meeting as follows:

Wednesday 15 September - Monday 20 September, midday

Arrival: Tuesday 14 September; departure: after lunch on Monday 20 September. The meeting would take place in Sigtuna, at a conference centre of the Church of Sweden.

17. CLOSING ACTIONS

The Moderator expressed his thanks to members of the Executive Committee for their active participation in the meeting, and to the General Secretary and staff for their help and support throughout.

Thanks were expressed by members of the Committee to Dr Jacques Nicole and staff of the Ecumenical Institute Bossey for their hospitality.

In concluding, the Moderator expressed gratitude to all those staff members who had served the Council and the ecumenical movement with devotion and commitment, and would be leaving the service of the World Council of Churches before the next Executive. In particular he mentioned Professor Todor Sabev who had served as Deputy General Secretary for 14 years, and Rev. Oh, Jae-Shik who had given leadership in Unit III during the last five years. He reminded them that, as they return to their local churches, they would become ambassadors for the WCC. May God strengthen them in their service to the ecumenical movement and to the churches.

Ms Birgitta Rantakari thanked the Officers for their guidance throughout the meeting.

The Moderator adjourned this meeting of the Executive Committee at 16.00 on Monday 22 March 1993. Rev. Nélida Ritchie closed with prayer.

APPENDIX I

ATTENDANCE

Presidents:	Prof. Dr Anna-Marie Aagaard
	Bishop Leslie Boseto
	Mrs Priyanka Mendis
	His Beatitude Patriarch Parthenios
	His Holiness Pope Shenouda
	Dr Aaron Tolen
Officers:	Archbishop Aram Keshishian (Moderator)
	Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan (Vice-Moderator)
	Pastora Nélida Ritchie (Vice-Moderator)
	Rev. Dr Konrad Raiser (General Secretary)
Members:	Ms Marion Best
	Mr John Briggs
	Metropolitan Daniel of Moldavia and Bukovina
	Ms Virginia Gcabashe
	Rev. Dr Margot Kaessmann
	Metropolitan Kirill of Smolensk
	Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky
	Ms Maryssa Mapanao
	Rt Rev. Dr J. Henry Okullu
	Ms Birgitta Rantakari
	Bishop Melvin G. Talbert
	Gr. Prot. Dr Georges Tsetsis
	Rt Rev. Dr Zacharias Mar Theophilus
Substitute	Ms Tungane Williams
Apologies:	Bishop Vinton Anderson
	Ms Beatrice Danquah
	Rt Rev. Drexel Gomez
	Rev. Sela Taufatofua-Manu
Consultants:	Rev. Georgij Gontcharov
	Dr Mary Tanner

Staff:	Rev. S. Wesley Ariarajah (part-time)
	Ms Jeanne Becher
	Mr Huibert van Beek (part-time)
	Ms Midge Béguin-Austin (part-time)
	Rev. Tom Best (part-time)
	Rev. Myra Blyth
	Prof. Ion Bria
	Mr Peter Brock (part-time)
	Rev. Michael Davies
	Rev. Christopher Duraisingh
	Ms Nicole Fischer (part-time)
	Rev. Günther Gassmann (part-time)
	Ms Aruna Gnanadason
	Rev. Wesley Granberg-Michaelson (part-time)
	Rev. Charles Harper (part-time)
	Mr Clement John (part-time)
	Mr Jan Kok
	Dr Jacques Nicole (part-time)
	Mr Daniel Ntoni-Nzinga (part-time)
	Ms Mercy Amba Oduyoye
	Mr Oh Jae Shik
	Rev. Hugh Pettingell
	Dr Klaus Poser
	Mr Günter Rath (part-time)
	Prof. Todor Sabev
	Ms Elizabeth Salter (part-time)
	Rev. Carlos Sintado
Interpreter:	Mr Mstislav Voskressensky
Minute-writer:	Ms Rosemary Green
Administration:	Ms Nan Braunschweiger
	Ms Brigitte Constant
	Ms Wendy Goldsworthy
	Ms Gudrun Smith
	Ms Ursula Zierl

APPENDIX II

MEMBERSHIP OF SUB-COMMITTEES

Sub-committee on Staffing and Nominations

Ephorus Dr Soritua Nababan	Moderator
Mr John Briggs	
Ms Virginia Gcabashe	
Bishop Drexel Gomez	(absent)
Dr Margot Kaessmann	
Metr. Kirill of Smolensk	
His Beatitude Parthenios	

Sub-committee on Finance

Ms Birgitta Rantakari	Moderator
Prof. Anne-Marie Aagaard	
Bishop Vinton Anderson	(absent)
Very Rev. Leonid Kishkovsky	
Ms Maryssa Mapanao	
Bishop Henry Okullu	
Rev. Eunice Santana	
Bishop Melvin Talbert	

Sub-committee on Programme

Rev. Nélida Ritchie	Moderator
Ms Marion Best	
Bishop Leslie Boseto	
Metr. Daniel of Moldavia	
Ms Beatrice Danquah	(absent)
Ms Priyanka Mendis	
H.H. Pope Shenouda	
Dr Aaron Tolen	
Dr Georges Tsetsis	
Bishop Zacharias Mar Theophilos	

APPENDIX III

REVIEW OF WCC FUNDS AND ACCOUNTING PRACTICES

1. Introduction

1.1 In mid-1991, when the new Finance Committee and the specially constituted "Financial Recovery Group" were finding out about the accounting practices of the WCC, some disquiet was expressed at the fact that well over half the Council's "turnover" went through the so-called Project Accounts and not through the Operating Funds. It was not therefore part of the Council's normal budget process or financial control.

1.2 At its meeting in September 1991, the Executive Committee agreed that:
"A review of all funds held or administered by the WCC, including those described as project or trust funds, be undertaken by the Assistant General Secretary and that he report to the Executive Committee as soon as possible with proposals for the future administration and accounting of these funds."

1.3 This was seen as part of a longer term strategy for financial management and control in the WCC, since changes in policy would require a fundamental review of accounting practice. The first task was to obtain information, study it, and formulate recommendations.

1.4 An interim report was made to the Finance Sub-committee in March 1992.

1.5 Although the detailed review is not yet complete, this paper contains proposals made in the light of the information already obtained.

2. Review Process

2.1 At the end of 1991, Unit Conveners, Office Directors and the staff Finance Management Group (FMG) were asked to supply information regarding all project/ trust funds in their spheres, and much useful background material was collected.

2.2 Because of other priorities, no further work was undertaken until October 1992 when the study was taken up again. Meetings took place with Unit Conveners, FOs and others, and data was collated prior to preparing draft pro forma schedules of funds. It has become clear that operating funds are just as important as project/trust funds in order to obtain a full picture.

2.3 Certain trends and conclusions have already emerged. The value of this exercise is not just in collecting and analysing data about numerous accounts, but

in coming to an understanding of the many and varied accounting practices of the Council and in trying to perceive a more uniform way of working. Despite the fact that the detailed work has only just begun (and will take many months to complete) a number of conclusions are already possible and, since these have a bearing on important decisions regarding the Council's accounts in general, the findings (up to Feb.1993) are set out below.

3. WCC Funds

3.1 To be of any real value, the review must take into account **all** the Council's funds, not just those described as "project/trust funds".

3.2 The **Operating Funds** of the Council are those accounted for in Swiss francs (SFr) and are part of the normal SFr 40 million Operating Budget (which is what we normally have in mind when we consider the Council's financial situation).

3.3 The **Project/Trust Funds** are those accounted for in US dollars (US$) and represent a varying turnover of approx.US$ 60 million (or SFr 90 million) a year. Although these are included in the Financial Report, they are treated almost as an appendix (1991 p 22) and are notionally translated into SFrs in the final column of the statement of funds (1991 p 17).

3.4 It seems that the rationale for this treatment is that they are deemed to be "in and out" transactions which the Council handles but over which it has little control; they are therefore included simply for information. Project/Trust Funds have not been included in the WCC budget process at all. Year-end accruals are not made - they are on a cash basis.

3.5 In reality, however, it is apparent that these Project/Trust Funds actually include a great deal of the Council's programmatic activity over which the Council (its Governing Bodies, Commissions and staff) has had very significant control over the years.

3.6 The current financial reporting and accounting practices of the Council do not adequately portray its full financial activities and resources. There is however no question of malpractice or concealment of information; all transactions are clearly shown in the accounts produced. Yet the way this information is presented does not give a clear, overall picture of the work of the Council and its resources.

3.7 The reason for this lies in the history of the Council - in the way different streams have flowed together, each bringing its own resources and ways of doing things to form the WCC as it is today - and in the semi-autonomy of the sub-units in the former structure.

3.8 The fundamental question now is whether we take the opportunity of the 1992 restructuring to rectify the situation and to bring to the Council's financial affairs a degree of consistency which will enable its work to be seen as a whole, whilst not in any way detracting from the flexibility and individuality of the programmes and activities of its Units.

4. The Present Funds Structure

4.1 As indicated above, the Council currently has two parallel funds structures. The only clear defining criterion is whether funds are accounted in SFrs or in US$s.

4.2 The **Operating Funds** are in SFrs and contain the basic "running expenses" of the Council (salaries and related costs, building maintenance, printing, PTT expenses, the Library, computers, language and news services - i.e. the infrastructure of the Council). In addition they contain such costs as Governing Bodies (including Unit Commissions, Working Groups, ad hoc committees, etc) and the annual contribution to the Assembly Reserve. However, the operating funds also contain some "programme costs" such as travel, consultations, some publications.

4.3 Within the overall framework of the "Operating Funds" there exist various funds for general or special purposes. Each Unit has a general operating fund and a "minimum fund", set up originally as an emergency reserve which could not be touched (except in the event of the winding up of the Council), whereas one-third of the operating fund could be called down in any year to balance the budget; this was the case until 1991 when the Finance Committee decided the WCC must live within its means on a year-by-year basis.

4.4 In addition there are many designated funds for specific programmes or objectives. For example, Faith and Order (which, being dependent on UDI, cannot accumulate an operating fund balance) has a "World Conference Reserve Fund" in which it has been allowed to build up resources towards the cost of its World Conference in 1993. When the Conference is over this account will presumably be closed. Other such funds are, however, more continuous in operation - the Week of Prayer Fund, the AIDS Programme Fund, the Internship Fund - which operate in parallel to the general operating fund of the Unit concerned. There are also such funds within the General Secretariat areas - the General Secretary's Discretionary Fund, various Communications Funds, Library Archives, Apartment Repairs, Building Reserve, etc.

4.5 It is the difference in the balances of these operating funds between the beginning and the end of the year which shows, after adjustments for accruals and reserves, whether the Council has made a surplus or a deficit in that year.

4.6 The **Project/Trust Funds**, however, contain a mass of transactions which do not pass through the operating accounts (or WCC budget) at all, but many of which are, in every sense, part of the programmatic activity of the Council.

4.7 Ideally a **trust account** is one where the Council receives funds, unsolicited, from a donor for a specific purpose determined by the donor (not a Council project) and transmits those funds directly to the recipient. There are very few true trust accounts and we might do well to concentrate them as an accounting function in one "Third party transfer account" so as not to complicate our main accounting procedures and results.

4.8 A **project account** should refer to one specific, clearly defined event or activity. The income should either be a contribution specifically from a donor for that project or a transfer from funds held by the WCC for that kind of activity. Funds should be transmitted to the recipient as a grant or contribution for the project. The term "project account" should not be used for a general activity operating account that receives income from a number of sources (and sometimes even from the Unit's operating funds), which is then used for a variety of projects or activities, or even for one specific programmatic activity.

4.9 In current practice in the WCC, however, whilst there are many specific project accounts within my definition, there are many "project" accounts which are in fact programme activity operating funds, like some of those referred to in 4.4 above on "operating funds".

4.10 Therefore, whilst some of the former sub-units conducted their programmes and activities through their operating funds, others ran their programmes and activities largely or entirely through project accounts and outside the operating funds of the Council.

4.11 This is no criticism of those who operated in this way. Systems have been different and sub-unit directors inherited their modus operandi when taking office. In most cases the system appears to have worked well from the point of view of the operators, and a sense of resentment at the possibility of change is understandable. The activities and programmes of Unit IV (formerly CICARWS) operate almost entirely through the project system. Their operating fund (or "service fund")

contains the basic running costs of the Unit - salaries, office costs, governing bodies, shared costs. The same is true of some other activities such as Urban/Rural Mission in Unit II, the Ecumenical Development Fund and World Youth Projects in Unit III and Scholarships now in Unit IV.

4.12 The problem is that these activities are outside the normal operating budget of the WCC and are shown separately in the accounts; this presents the Governing Bodies with a false picture of the extent and depth of the real activities and work of the Council.

5. The Way Forward - A New Accounting Strcuture

5.1 How then do we address the fundamental question (3.8 above)?

5.2 The advent of the new WCC structure presents an ideal opportunity to re-cast our accounts in a way which is fully transparent and yet in no way inhibits Units from continuing tried and tested patterns of operation.

5.3 In 1993 we must move from the HP computer accounting package (which the WCC has endured for more than a decade) to a more modern, user-friendly accounting package which can make use of the PC LAN system recently installed in the House.

5.4 For income development purposes it is clear that we need simpler, clearer public accounts which really show what the WCC is doing and what its financial needs are.

5.5 The proposal now is that we should move from the present inadequate and misleading accounting policy of dividing Operating Funds from Project/Trust Funds, to a more flexible three-way accounting structure as explained below.

5.6 First, however, it is necessary to define some terms, since part of our problem in the past has been that people have used words in different ways. The following terms are used here:

5.7 **A. (Unit) General Account** - this account represents the basic Unit operating or infrastructure costs (see below) and undesignated Unit income (UDI).

5.8 **B. Activities Accounts** - these accounts represent the programmatic activity of the Unit (except for those included in the General Account above).

5.9 C. **Project Account** - these accounts represent the specific, clearly identified projects which the Council is promoting and supporting (but **not** those former project accounts which have been used as programme or control accounts; these will become Activities Accounts).

5.10 A. The concept here is that the **General Account** will receive all the basic, undesignated income of the Unit (block grants, undesignated interest, exchange profits, etc) and pay out the core expenses of the Unit such as:

1. Salaries/staff related costs
2. (Unit) Governing Bodies (Commissions, Working Groups)
3. Direct Office costs (PTT, Printshop, Economat)
4. Shared costs (GS/OMF)
5. Travel (general - non-programmatic)
6. Production costs
7. Depreciation
8. Exchange losses

5.11 B. The **Activities Accounts** will include all those programmatic activities of the Unit which are not included in the General Account above and which are not specific Projects (defined in 5.13 C below). The income will be restricted contributions for those particular activities, restricted interest, transfers from other Units for those activities and transfers from the General Account. The expenses might include:

1. Consultations - meetings
2. Travel (for programmatic activities)
3. Publications
4. Development
5. Other programmatic activities

5.12 Units may identify expenditure headings which indicate more clearly the types of programme or activity in which they are engaged. The plural "Activities Accounts" is used because, while there will need to be a summary or control column in Units' budgets and accounts for "Activities", there will also be a series of individual accounts for use in financial management in the Unit (as there are now).

5.13 C. The **Specific Project Accounts** will probably still be a multitude of individual projects around the world which the WCC and its partners have identified and agreed to support and advocate. The income will be either a quite specific contribution received from a donor for that individual project or an allocation from

an appropriate activity account into which more general contributions have been paid from donors. For example, World Youth Projects would be classified as an activity account, but it would continue, just as it does now, to transfer money to individual project accounts as a result of the existing decision-making structures. Since "Emergencies" in Unit IV cannot be foreseen or budgeted for, they should also be in this category. In most cases Specific Project Accounts will be concerned with one event or activity and will be of limited duration, after which the account will be closed. Often such an account will be opened and closed within a single calendar year. Balances on such accounts at the end of a year will be treated as an "amount due in respect of a specific project", i.e. a debtor or creditor for balance sheet purposes, not as a "fund", which would affect the surplus or deficit on the Unit for that year. Careful negotiation between the Units and the Finance Department will be needed to agree which current project accounts can legitimately be classified as Specific Project Accounts in future.

5.14 (Note: As suggested in section 4.7 above, true trust funds should probably be dealt with through a "Third party transfer account" and not form part of the Units' accounts).

5.15 **The Unit Account** would therefore have four columns:

Total	General	Activities	Projects

5.16 The total account would include all the income and expenditure item headings from the three analysis accounts (except that the internal transfers within those accounts would balance each other out exactly and need not be included in this column). It would therefore show clearly the overall financial situation of the Unit, including its opening and closing balances, the difference being the overall surplus or deficit on the Unit's work during the year. (Note: it may be necessary to adapt the present cash basis for current project accounts when these are redesignated Activities Accounts to include accruals so as to give a fair picture of the "performance" in a given year - further research is necessary on how best to handle this).

5.17 The General Account will indicate the general Unit income and the base costs (5.10 above). It will also show transfers from activities and project accounts towards those base costs, if such transfers can properly be made (see section 8), but will also indicate transfers to activities and project accounts, where it is the policy of the Unit to support such things from general income.

5.18 The Activities Account (which will be a summary or control account for all the activities accounts the Unit decides to maintain - 5.12 above) will show the designated income (contributions and interest) for activities, transfers from other Units and from the Unit's own General Account. It will also show the expenditure on the various classes of activity including transfers to specific project accounts, to the General Account (contributions towards base costs such as salaries) and to other Units (for joint/cross Unit activities).

5.19 The Projects Account (again a summary or control account for all the specific, individual projects of the Unit) will include contributions designated for specific projects, transfers from the Activities Account, etc. Its expenditure will represent grants or payments made to the specific projects and any transfers agreed from project accounts to General Account as a contribution to administration. In any given year the Projects Account will be "self-balancing" (many accounts will actually be opened and closed within the accounting year) so that it will not contribute to the surplus or deficit of the Unit.

5.20 The General and Activities Accounts will show an excess of income over expenditure or vice versa (the Total column will show the net result for the Unit as a whole).
5.21 Any transfer from (or even to) WCC Undesignated income will then be shown at this point (as in the current budget display).

5.22 The January 1 fund balances will then be introduced and added to/subtracted from the excess/deficit figures to give the final figure, which will be the closing, December 31 fund balances.

5.23 Similar, but suitably adapted accounts will be produced for the General Secretariat, the Offices of Relationships and Communication and the Office of Management and Finance, giving (as in the present budget display) seven columns plus a total column for the whole WCC account.

5.24 Within the Unit the three main analysis columns can be further analysed for management and control purposes by the Finance Officer using a spread sheet (the new spread sheet must be compatible with any new accounts package we obtain) so that all the various activities can be set out individually.

6. Accounting Currencies
6.1 The Auditors had already raised the question whether we needed to continue accounting in two currencies. Historically the US$ was used widely by the Council

(over 90% of its income initially coming from the USA) and the dollar is still the common currency in some parts of the world. However, it is no longer the point of stability in the world currency markets and income from the USA is now less than 20% of the whole. The use of the US$ and the SFr as dual currencies of accounting makes our accounting very complicated and has contributed to the lack of clarity in our presentation of accounts. It would also be much more expensive to perpetuate dual currency accounting when we move to a new accounts programme as there are very few programmes which provide for it.

6.2 It seems clear that, at the time we implement the proposed changes, we should also move to a single currency of accounting - and that currency should most probably be the SFr. The Audit Committee agreed that we should move to single currency accounting but advised that we should weigh carefully the decision about which currency (US $ or SFr) we should use. However, there seems to be no strong arguement for using the US $, and the SFr seems the logical currency for a Swiss-based organisation paying its salaries and most operating expenses locally.

6.3 It should, however, be made quite clear that we are talking here of **the currency of accounting**, i.e. the currency in which our working and published accounts are presented. The Council will, of course, have to continue to receive and pay out moneys in a whole range of currencies, as it does now, and if Units wish to talk in US$s to contributors or recipients, there is no reason why they should not do so. But the books will be kept in one currency, though a good accounting package will allow individual accounts to show the value of transactions in US $s or indeed in any other necessary currency as well as the SFr. We anticipate that this will save money in various ways, and the Comptroller has been asked to study this matter further and to prepare a separate report on its iimplementation for consideration.

6.4 The move to single currency accounting is an essential element of the process outlined in this paper.

7 Shared or re-distributed Costs

7.1 The Finance Committee agreed to a new formula proposed by the Financial Recovery Group in March 1992:

a) All general, administrative and overhead costs of the Council should be charged to Units and others, including where appropriate tenants and others in the House who benefit - i.e. the costs of the Office of Management and Finance (except for OICD) should be re-distributed in one way or another;

b) UDI should be used to cover the costs of the General Secretariat (General Secretary, Deputies and Assistant GS and their offices), Governing Bodies, Assembly Reserve, fund raising (OICD) and such

other operations as may be agreed from time to time by the Finance Committee on the recommendation of the Staff Executive Group. The balance should be available for new initiatives by the Central Committee for a limited period until designated income has been generated;

c) All programme Units should generate sufficient designated income for their work;

d) Since the Unit will be the financial base in the future, designation should, as far as possible, be for the Unit rather than for a specific programme or desk within it.

7.2 The staff have been trying to apply these guidelines in their budget operations. However, certain points have become clear:

a) it will take some time for all Units to generate sufficient Unit-designated income to cover their needs and WCC undesignated income (UDI) will be required for some years to subsidise the work of some Units;

b) UDI has remained static (i.e. reduced in real terms) over many years and is insufficient to meet all the costs which could properly fall on it and to subsidise Units;

c) more costs have had to be re-distributed as a way of releasing UDI for programmatic work dependant on it and in order to share the infrastructure costs across the whole of the Council;

d) although the Executive Committee agreed to rationalise this re-distribution and laid down clear guidelines in March 1992, some donors and staff still object to the re-distribution of some costs which they do not feel are a fair charge on their Unit funds;

e) when there is an underspending on a re-distributed cost, this has not been repaid to contributors in the current year, nor can it be deducted from re-distributed costs for the coming year since these have already been computed and budgeted; so they have to be carried forward for subsequent years which has led to wide fluctuations in redistributed costs over the years - a matter which requires further study.

7.3 One problem has been that the dual form of accounting in the past has given a completely unrealistic impression of the amount of shared costs in relation to the work being done and the financial turnover of the Council. For example, in Unit IV it has been quoted that shared costs represent 34% of the operating budget. However, because the majority of turnover in Unit IV goes through the project system at present (and that work has to be staffed and serviced) the real percentage of shared costs is reduced to 3.157% of the total. Shared costs must be seen against the total financial background of a Unit and of the Council as a whole, not just the so-called "operating budget".

7.4 Notwithstanding the above point we need maybe to take seriously the complaints of a few donors who say that their "designated funds" should not be used for purposes which, as they see it, do not comply with their mandate. There seems to be little dispute about the need to re-distribute general service costs (such as those of the OMF - personnel, finance, central services, computer and Library) so long as these costs are carefully controlled. It may be necessary, however, to

re-examine which other costs are re-distributed. It has been suggested by one group of major donors that it would be more acceptable to their organisations if we added the General Secretariat and Governing Bodies to the costs re-distributed and removed Publications and the Language Service. This matter needs further consideration so that any adjustment is taken into account when overall changes are made.

8. Charges and Transfers for Administrative Costs

8.1 As a general principle it is recognised that it is legitimate for an organisation to make an administrative charge in respect of funds it handles and activities it organises. Staff and infrastructure costs have to be met. The Finance Committee in the past has agreed that such a charge of up to 10% can be made on project and trust funds.

8.2 However, the situation in practice is inconsistent - and often with good reason. In some cases a charge, usually 10%, is made and transferred to the operating budget. In some cases (usually in connection with some of the large "control" project accounts) a yearend transfer is made ad hoc in the light of the health of the operating budget and funds available. Sometimes this is substantial. On the other hand, there are examples where the project donor also contributes a separate sum direct to the operating budget and therefore insists on the project contributions being paid over gross.

8.3 The amount of administrative work involved in handling projects varies greatly. Sometimes, even though the project is indisputably a WCC one, our actual costs are minimal. In other cases there is a greater staff or "programmatic" involvement in screening, advising, enabling, monitoring, and reporting, in addition to the basic accounting functions.

8.4 In view of the proposed changes in dealing with activities and projects, it is not recommended that any immediate action should be taken but that, when the new system is running, the matter should be reviewed to see if more consistent guidelines can be worked out.

9. Fund Balances

9.1 As will be seen from the Financial Report (1991 p. 16/7), different sub-units and sectors of the Council have considerable "Operating Funds". Some of these are unrestricted - often accrued surpluses from the past where sub-units had their own designated income - some restricted for particular purposes (e.g. the Faith and Order Conference - see para 4.4 above).

9.2 These Funds have now been allocated to the new Units, depending on the interests covered by those Units.

9.3 Over the years the Governing Bodies have laid down rules and guidelines for the use of these fund balances. For example:

a) When an expense can be legitimately covered by two sources of funds, the most highly designated funds will be used first.

b) Some designation of funds is by the donor, some by the WCC (staff or Governing Bodies). Donor designated funds cannot be used for purposes other than those designated without the donor's consent; internal designation is not binding and may be changed by the Governing Bodies of the WCC. Where there are designated funds surplus to requirements, attempt will be made to obtain re-designation.

c) Minimum Fund Balances have been built up representing 15% of the operating costs of the sub-units. If the sub-unit went over budget it could draw on these funds, but had to restore them the following year. The total at Jan. 1, 1992 was SFr 4.26 million

d) Until the Finance Committee determined in 1991 that the Council should live within its income in any given year, sub-units were able to use up to one-third of their unrestricted operating fund balance in order to balance their budget. Restricted balances amounted to SFr 4.185 million on Jan. 1, 1992 and unrestricted balances to SFr 10.539 million.

e) An Emergency Reserve (just over SFr 3 million) is held "to be used (by decision of the Central Committee) only in the event of a major crisis, which threatens in whole or in part the continuation of the work of the WCC".

f) The Exchange Fluctuation Reserve (SFr 3 million) is held for the specific purpose of guarding against major currency exchange crises and will be used to "top up" income if rates fall below those budgeted.

g) There is also a General Reserve of nearly SFr 7.5 million.

h) It had been hoped that undesignated interest would be available for new programmes and initiatives, but it has been required to balance the Council's operating budget in recent times.

9.4 It seems clear that, in the implementation of new accounting policies, a review of policy regarding operating balances and reserves will be necessary. The Finance Committee will need to determine what it considers to be a responsible sum to keep for general emergency reserves and for minimum fund balances in Units. It must then consider if other reserves and operating fund balances should be made available for use and, if so, under what circumstances. (For example, major maintenance work is urgently required to restore the fabric at Bossey - should this cost not be taken from the General Reserve now, to prevent further deterioration, and paid back over a period of years?)

9.5 Some sectors of the House have deficits on their operating funds from the past - these also need to be looked at and probably written off to make a clean start under the new structure.

9.6 The Council has some SFr 4 million in Endowment Funds. It should be the aim of the Council to increase these for certain basic parts of the Council's activity for which revenue funding is not easy to obtain (e.g. Bossey, the Library, Faith and Order).

10. Responsibilities of Unit Committees and Unit Commissions

10.1 Constitutionally, the final responsibility for financial matters in the Council lies with the Central Committee and its Finance Committee. Prior to re-structuring, however, a good deal of detailed financial and budgetary work was done by the former sub-unit Commissions - so much so that the Finance Committee felt at times that its hands were tied.

10.2 The Cambridge Associates, in their management study of the Council in 1991, identified this as a major area of concern. They advised that, in order to ensure financial equilibrium, financial control by the Finance Committee should be reaffirmed, while Commissions should be given a strictly advisory role in programmatic areas only (and be excluded from any part in financial or staffing processes).

10.3 In setting up the new structures for the Council, the Advisory Group and subsequently the Central Committee followed this advice, and at present the Commissions are not seen as having any place in the financial and budgetary processes of the Council (other than to be kept informed regarding the financial situation and the resources available).

10.4 In fact, this arrangement is not proving practicable. Whilst the Finance Committee can and should take a very positive role in controlling the overall finances and budgets of the Council, it has neither the time nor the expertise to deal with the practical, detailed allocation of resources within Units. If this is not done by the Commission (or a sub-group of it), it has to be done by staff - which is not desirable.

10.5 It seems, therefore, that in the review of the roles of the Unit Committees and Commissions there needs to be clarification on this matter. The Finance Committee should, without any doubt, retain the overall responsibility for the financial resources and budget processes of the Council, but the Commissions should be given responsibility for the supervision of the Units' use of resources within the approved budget, particularly so far as the allocation of programmatic activity and project funds are concerned.

10.6 In the former structure and financial processes of the Council, the Finance Committee dealt with the operating budget and the Commissions dealt with project funds. In view of the arbitary way in which these were sometimes divided up, this was a false distinction. The definition of the responsibilities of Committees and Commissions in respect of finance will thus need to be spelled out very clearly when the new form of accounting is introduced.

11. Implementation

11.1 Following the thorough scrutiny and revision carried out by the Finance Management Group, by the Units/Offices and by the Staff Executive Group, these proposals formed the basis for discussion at the Finance Sub-committee meeting on 17 March 1993. The recommendations were subsequently submitted to the Executive Committee for approval (see page 49).

11.2 Once approved, the new accounting method should be fully implemented as quickly as possible so that the 1993 accounts can reflect the new policies. Hopefully a new accounting package will be installed and running by the end of 1993, though a transitional period will be necessary and it may be 1994 before it is in full use.

11.3 Meanwhile, 1992 was the first year of the new structure and the Financial Report and Accounts for 1992 ought to reflect this as well as the policy suggested in this paper.

11.4 To make progress it is important that preparatory steps be taken as quickly as possible (seeking a computer package, re-arranging accounts codes, identifying which are specific project accounts and which are activities accounts, etc). This requires a general consensus that we proceed as suggested, including the decision to abandon dual currency accounting and move to the accounting format suggested in section 5 of this report.

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for Finance and Administration

(The recommendations based on this report were approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting in March 1993 and can be found under the Report of the Finance Sub-committee on page 49 of these Minutes)